Responding to an opioid overdose

Use Naloxone. Give Breaths.

Call 911. Stay and help. Canada’s Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act may protect you. Opioids are depressants that slow the body down. They include heroin, fentanyl, oxycodone, codeine, morphine, methadone and hydromorphone.

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Tips To Save A Life

Choose a safer route when taking drugs.

Have a buddy or use overdose prevention sites. Make sure someone can call for help.

Start low, go slow. Drugs may be stronger than you realize.

Have an overdose plan. Carry naloxone.


Take care of yourself. Use less when having health issues or haven’t used for a while.

Brain damage can occur within minutes. Naloxone works in 3-5 minutes. For those trained in CPR: If a person is found not breathing and the overdose not witnessed, give chest compressions too.

*The Take Home Naloxone program distributes injectable naloxone only.
Responding to a stimulant overdose

**Stimulants** or “uppers” speed the body up, like amphetamines, crystal meth, cocaine, MDMA (Ecstasy), Ritalin and caffeine.

**SIGNS of a stimulant overdose**

- **Rigid, jerking limbs or seizures**
  - Remove any object nearby that could hurt them. Do not restrain or put anything in their mouth.

- **Fast pulse or chest pains**
  - If the heart has stopped, provide chest compressions.

- **Unconscious or in-and-out**
  - If unconscious, do not put anything in their mouth.

- **Skin feels hot, sweating or severe headaches**

- **Anxiety, paranoia, confusion, agitation or hallucinations**
  - They may be overamplifying and need support and rest.
    - Encourage not using any more substances
    - Move away from activity and noise
    - Give water but don’t overhydrate
    - Place cool, wet cloths on forehead, back of neck, armpits

**CALL 911. Stay and help. Keep the person comfortable, conscious and hydrated.**

BC Drug & Poison Info Centre 1-800-567-8911 (24 hrs)

Canada’s Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act may protect you. If you are at the scene of an overdose and you or someone else calls 911 to get medical assistance, you are not to be charged with simple possession (possession for your own personal use) of an illegal substance. You are also not to be charged for breach of probation or parole relating to simple drug possession.

More at canada.ca/opioids

There is no antidote to stimulant overdose. Call 911.

Naloxone can still help if a person has taken a mix of drugs. When in doubt, use naloxone. It’s safe.

**Tips To Save A Life**

Choose a safer route when taking drugs.

- **Have a buddy or use overdose prevention sites. Make sure someone can call for help.**
- **Start low, go slow.** Drugs may be stronger than you realize.
- **Have an overdose plan. Carry naloxone.**
- **Beware of mixing. Avoid using alcohol, Prescription drugs increase overdose risk.**
- **Take care of yourself.** Use less when having health issues or haven’t used for a while.