

Responding to an Overdose with Naloxone

Last updated: Mar 15, 2022

STEP 1 Recognize an Opioid Overdose

Someone who is experiencing an opioid overdose will have slow or irregular (gurgling) breathing, or may not be breathing at all.

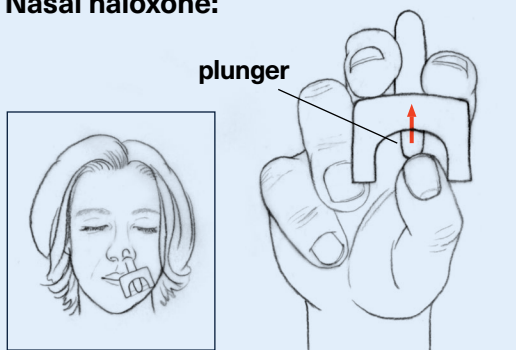
If you are unsure if the person is just sleeping or unconscious, administer a sternal rub by making a fist and rubbing your knuckles firmly along the person's sternal bone.

This is painful enough to wake a sleeping or unconscious person, but will not reverse an opioid overdose.



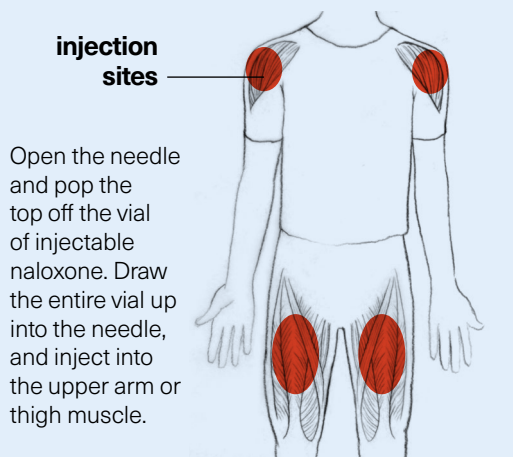
STEP 2 Administer naloxone

Nasal naloxone:



Peel off the tab and insert the tip into one nostril. Push firmly to administer the full dose into the nostril. You do not need to spray in both nostrils.

Injectable naloxone:



Open the needle and pop the top off the vial of injectable naloxone. Draw the entire vial up into the needle, and inject into the upper arm or thigh muscle.

Start a timer or count to 2 minutes while administering rescue breathing if you are able.

If the person is not responding or breathing on their own after 2 minutes, you can give them another dose of injectable or nasal naloxone.

Naloxone takes about 3-5 minutes to take effect, and **more than one dose may be necessary** if the person has ingested fentanyl.

STEP 3 (OPTIONAL) Call 9-1-1

When you call 9-1-1:

- let the operator know that you are with someone who is unresponsive and not breathing
- give your exact location
- tell them if you used naloxone already

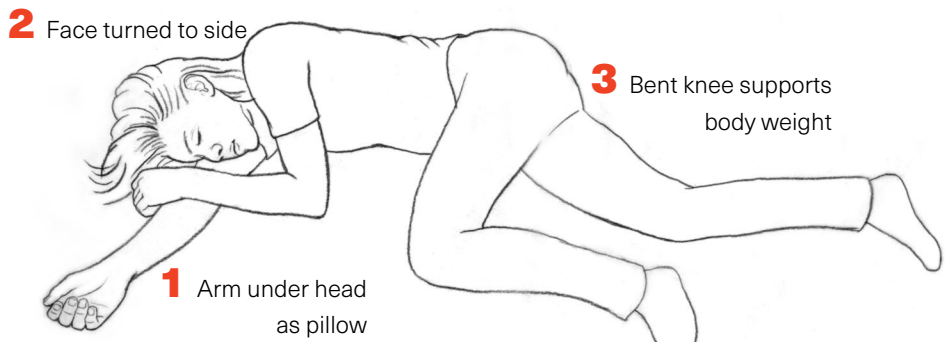
You do **not** need to tell the operator that you think the person used illegal drugs, especially if you think this will put them in danger.

You are protected in Illinois by the Good Samaritan law, which prevents you and the person whose overdose you are reversing from being charged or prosecuted for felony possession of different substances.

STEP 4 Recovery Position

Once the person is breathing on their own again, put the person in the Recovery Position so that their airway is clear and they won't choke on their own vomit if they get sick.

Roll the person on to one of their sides, place one arm under the head to pillow the head and keep the face turned to the side, and support the body weight with a bent knee so the legs are in the shape of the number 4.



STEP 5 Aftercare

You can try to engage them by saying **"Hi, my name is [YOUR NAME], and I just had to give you naloxone. I'm sorry you're not feeling great. Sit up when you're ready. You're safe, and I'm glad you're alive."**