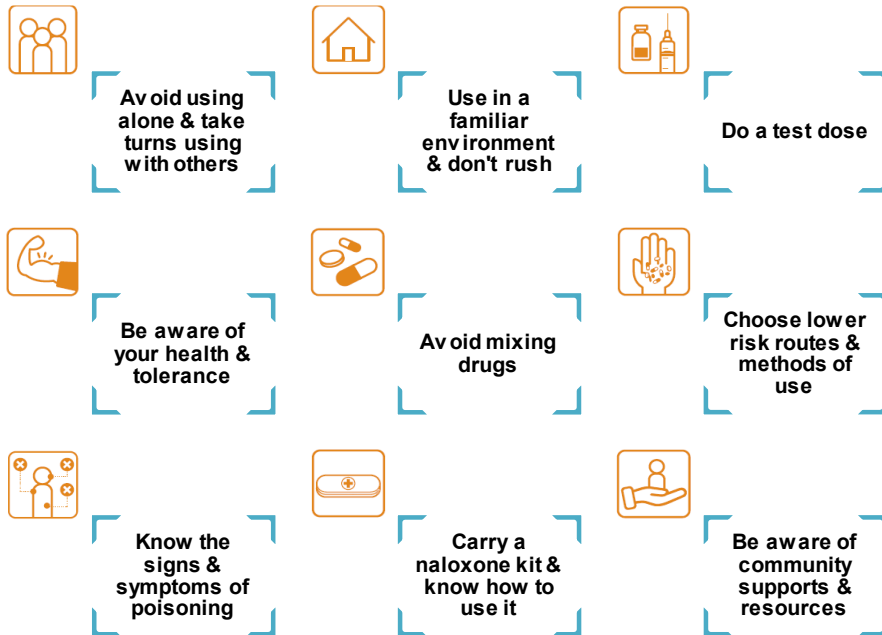


# Opioid Poisoning Prevention & Response

## How to prevent poisoning



**Opioids** are drugs that relieve pain and slow down body functions like breathing and heart rate. Sometimes they are called depressants or downers.

Examples: morphine, oxycodone, fentanyl, carfentanyl, hydromorphone, heroin, methadone and buprenorphine.

**Poisoning** (or overdose) is when the amount of drug taken is more than the body can handle and causes harm. Poisoning is a medical emergency and 911 should be called for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to help.

### Signs of Opioid Poisoning

- Slow or no breathing
- Unresponsive to voice or painful touch (can't wake them)
- Pale face
- Blue lips or nails
- Gurgling or snoring
- Choking or vomiting
- Cold or damp skin
- Constricted (tiny) pupils
- Stiff body or seizure-like movement

### Help with Substance Use

**Health Link** for health advice: 811 (24/7)

**Addiction Helpline:** 1-866-332-2322 (24/7)

**Mental Health Helpline:** 1-877-303-2642 (24/7)

## How to respond to opioid poisoning

Carry a naloxone kit and follow the instructions in the kit.

**Naloxone** is a drug that temporarily reverses opioid effects and can save someone experiencing poisoning by helping them breathe again. It is given by injection into the muscle of the thigh or upper arm.

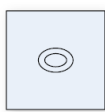
- Naloxone works in 3 to 5 minutes
- Naloxone stops working after 20 to 90 minutes (poisoning can return when it wears off)
- Naloxone should be stored away from light and between 15 to 30°C\*
- Naloxone kits expire (check expiry on side of vials and on back of kit)\*

\*Don't throw out naloxone that has expired or been in extreme temperature unless there is new naloxone to replace it. It may still help during a poisoning and can be safely used.

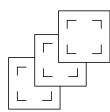
### Kit contents:



gloves



mask



3 alcohol pads



3 syringes



3 vials of Naloxone



For support after a poisoning, visit [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://myhealth.alberta.ca) for mental health and grief support information.

# How to respond to opioid poisoning with a naloxone kit

## How To Respond To An Opioid Poisoning With Naloxone

Alberta Health Services  
ALBERTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL ON RISK



Help improve the Community Based Naloxone Program: Scan the QR code or visit [js.gd/naloxonekit](https://js.gd/naloxonekit) to report kit use anonymously.

**Read through the instruction booklet in your kit and practice the actions in each step.**

**Before responding:** Check your surroundings for hazards and call 911 if you feel it is unsafe to approach.

1. Look for signs of opioid poisoning.
2. Check for response by trying to wake them up by voice or painful touch. Call 911 if they don't respond.
3. Check for breathing.
  - a. If they are not breathing, give rescue breaths for 2 minutes using the CPR mask.
  - b. If they are breathing, put them in recovery position.
4. If rescue breathing does not help, prepare naloxone injection.
5. Inject naloxone and follow with 2 minutes of rescue breathing.
6. Repeat doses of naloxone every 3 to 5 minutes with 2 minutes of rescue breaths between doses until help arrives.

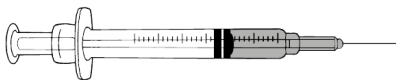
**After the person recovers from poisoning:** Support them by remaining calm, letting them know they are safe, and explaining to them what happened and what they need to know to stay safe if they were given naloxone.

**Don't forget to take care of yourself after responding to or experiencing poisoning.**

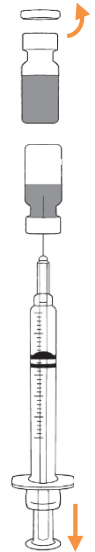
## How to prepare naloxone injection

- Take plastic cap off vial.
- Hold the vial upside down and insert the needle into the rubber stopper of the vial.
- Keep the needle in the liquid while in the vial to avoid drawing in excess air.
- Pull back on plunger to draw liquid into syringe.
- Draw all the liquid out of the vial until it is empty (about 1 mL).
- Push out excess air only after the dose has been drawn.
- The VanishPoint syringe has a safety feature that pulls the needle into the barrel of the syringe when the plunger is pushed all the way in. You may hear or feel a click when this happens.

BEFORE



AFTER



## How to inject naloxone

- Inject into the deep muscle of the thigh or upper arm (circled area in picture).
- You can inject through clothing if it is thin enough, and you can't expose the skin.
- Hold the syringe like a dart and insert into the skin at a 90° angle.
- Push the plunger in slowly and steadily until you feel or hear a click that engages the needle safety mechanism.
- If the safety does not engage, pull the needle out in the same direction it was inserted and push the plunger in again (once needle is removed from skin) to engage the safety.
- Dispose of your syringes safely in a sharps container or your kit until you can dispose of them.
- Keep your empty vials of naloxone for EMS to see how many doses were given.

