

## Overdose Awareness

### Signs of an Overdose

An overdose looks different depending on the drug taken. Here are some signs of an overdose.

- **Difficulty**
  - walking
  - talking
  - staying awake
- **Blue lips or nails**
- **Very small pupils**
- **Cold and clammy skin**
- **Dizziness and confusion**
- **Extreme drowsiness**
- **Choking, gurgling or snoring sounds**
- **Slow, weak or no breathing**
- **Inability to wake up, even when shaken or shouted at**
- **Throwing up**
- **Seizure**
- **Chest Pains**

#### What not to do is somebody is ODing

- **Don't leave them alone**
- **Don't put them in a shower or bath**
- **Don't leave them on their back**
- **Don't smack, hit or hurt them to try and bring them around**
- **Don't give them other drugs**
- **Don't inject them with salt water**

These will all just make things worse.

### Responding to an Overdose

- **Call 911 and stay on the line**
- **Stay with the person**
- **Put the person into the recovery position**
- **If the person is not breathing, begin rescue breathing**
- **If it is a suspected opioid overdose, administer naloxone.**

An overdose is always an emergency. Always call for help.

#### Tips to prevent an overdose

- **Don't use alone**
- **Know your source and ask around**
- **Do 'test shots' (smaller amounts than usual)**
- **Start using in small amounts if you haven't used in a while**
- **Be careful if you have liver problems or hep C**
  - **Know the risks of mixing drugs**
  - **Avoid speedballing**
- **Don't use methadone that has not been prescribed for you.**

#### Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act

The Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act provides some legal protection for people who experience or witness an overdose and call 911 for help. The act can protect you from:

- **Charges for possession of a controlled substance (i.e. drugs)**
- **Breach of conditions regarding simple possession of controlled substances (i.e. drugs) in pre-trial release, probation orders, conditional sentences, and parole.**

The Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act applies to anyone seeking support during an overdose, including the person experiencing an overdose. The act protects the person who seeks help, whether they stay or leave from the overdose scene before help arrives. The act also protects anyone else who is at the scene when help arrives.

The act does not provide legal protection against more serious offences, such as outstanding warrants, production and trafficking of controlled substances, and all other crimes not outlined in the act.

Information taken from:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-abuse/prescription-drug-abuse/opioids/about-good-samaritan-drug-overdose-act.html>

[https://www.overdoseday.com/wp-content/uploads/IOAD-Factsheet\\_Posters\\_A3-1.pdf](https://www.overdoseday.com/wp-content/uploads/IOAD-Factsheet_Posters_A3-1.pdf)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-abuse/prescription-drug-abuse/opioids/overdose.html>

Alberta Health Services: Overdose Prevention; Save a Life