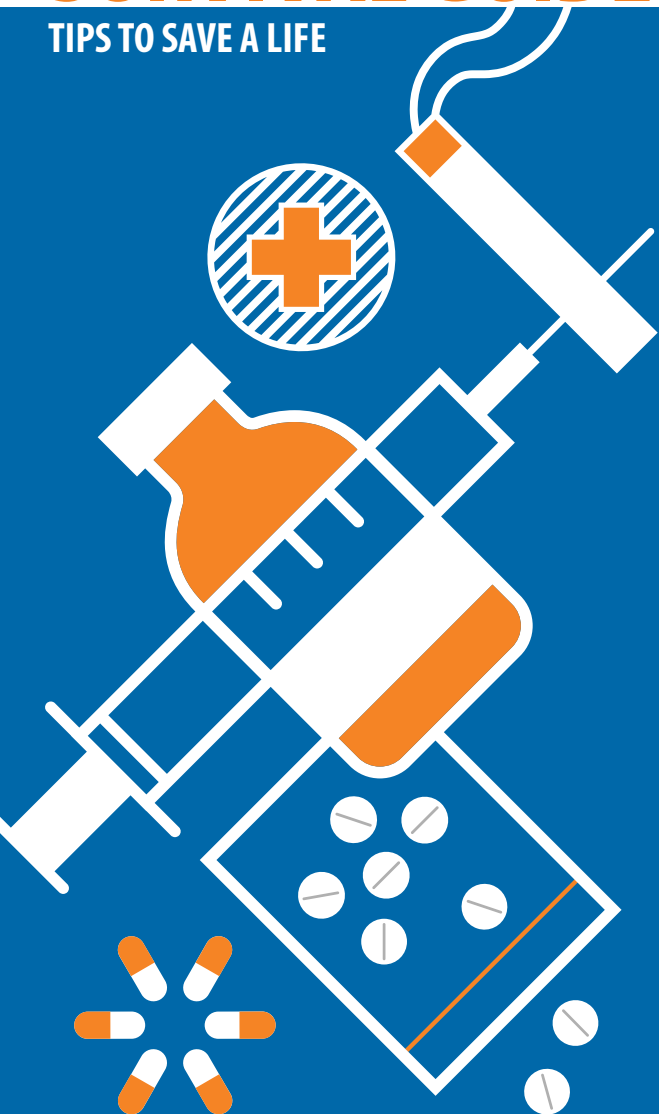


# OVERDOSE SURVIVAL GUIDE

TIPS TO SAVE A LIFE



Overdose Prevention and Response

[www.gnb.ca/opioids](http://www.gnb.ca/opioids)

New Brunswick  
Nouveau Brunswick

## PREVENTION

### Overdose is most common when:

- Your tolerance is lower; you took a break, were in detox/treatment or jail, or you are new to use.
- You have been sick, tired, run down, dehydrated or have liver issues.
- You mix drugs; prescribed or not, legal or illegal.
- The drugs are stronger than you are used to; changes in supply, dealer, or town.

### To prevent overdose:

- Know your health status and your tolerance.
- Do not mix drugs and alcohol. If you do mix, choose to use drugs before alcohol.
- Be aware; using drugs while on prescribed medications can increase overdose risk.
- Don't use alone. Leave door unlocked. Tell someone to check on you.
- Do testers to check strength. Use less. Pace yourself.
- Talk to an experienced person or a trusted healthcare provider about reducing risk.
- Know CPR and get trained on giving naloxone.
- Choose a safer route of taking drugs.

## THE RECOVERY POSITION

### Keep the airway clear



*Hand supports head.*

*Knee stops body from rolling onto stomach.*

Stay with person. If you must leave them alone at any point, or if they are unconscious, put them in this position to keep the airway clear and prevent choking.

**Call 911 for help.**

# OVERDOSE?



# TAKE CHARGE.



# TAKE CARE.

## OPIOIDS / DEPRESSANTS (e.g., opioids: morphine, dilaudid, heroin / depressants: alcohol, GHB, benzodiazepines)

### Feels and looks like:

- Person cannot stay awake.
- Can't talk or walk.
- Slow or no pulse.
- Slow or no breathing, gurgling.
- Skin looks pale or blue, feels cold.
- Pupils are pinpoint or eyes rolled back.
- Vomiting.
- Body is limp.
- **No response to noise or knuckles being rubbed hard on the breast bone.**



### In case of opioid overdose:

- Stay with person. Use their name. Tell them to breathe.
- Call 911 and tell them person is not breathing.
- When paramedics arrive tell them as much as you can about drugs and dose.
- Use naloxone if available. Naloxone only works on opioid overdose.
- After naloxone a person might feel withdrawal. Do not take more drugs. Sick feeling will go away when naloxone wears off (30 – 75 minutes). Be aware: overdose can return.



### SAVE ME

**Stimulation** – Can you wake them up? If not, **call 911.**

**Airway** – Make sure there's nothing in their mouth that stops them from breathing.

**Ventilate** – Breathe for them. (Plug nose, tilt head back, and give 1 breath every 5 secs).

**Evaluate** – Are they any better? Are you trained to give naloxone?

**Muscular injection** – Inject 1cc of naloxone into a *muscle*.

**Evaluate and support** – Is the person breathing on their own? If they're not awake in 5 minutes, another 1cc dose is needed. Tell the person not to use any more drugs right now — wait at least 2 hours.

*This is proven to work. Other remedies can actually be harmful.*

## STIMULANTS (e.g., cocaine, methamphetamine, ecstasy)

### Feels and looks like:

- Fast pulse or no pulse.
- Short of breath.
- Body is hot/sweaty, or hot/dry.
- Confusion, hallucinations, unconscious.
- Clenched jaw.
- Shaky.
- Chest pain.
- Seizures.
- Vomiting.
- Cannot talk or walk.



There are **NO** medications to safely reverse a stimulant overdose.

### Assessment: Are they experiencing A or B?

#### A: MENTAL DISTRESS/OVERAMP

Associated with sleep deprivation, crashing, anxiety, paranoia. If a person is conscious and you are sure this is not medical in nature, they may just need support and rest.

#### WHAT TO DO:

- Keep calm. Stay with person. Use their name.
- Give water or fluid with electrolytes. Do not overhydrate.
- Place cool, wet cloths under: armpits, back of neck, and head.
- Open a window for fresh air.
- Get them comfortable. Move away from activity.
- If aggressive/paranoid suggest they close their eyes, give person space.
- Encourage person not to take any other substances.

**If you're not comfortable with the situation, call 911.**

#### B: PHYSICAL DISTRESS/ACUTE STIMULANT TOXICITY

**Medical attention is required immediately** if person has:

- Jerking or rigid limbs.
- Rapidly escalating body temperature and pulse.
- In and out of consciousness.
- Severe: headache, sweating, agitation.
- Chest pains.

#### WHAT TO DO:

- **Call 911.**
- Stay with person.
- Keep person: conscious, hydrated, calm.
- If heart has stopped do 'hands-only' CPR.
- **Tell medical professionals as much as possible so they can give the right treatment to prevent organ damage and death.**

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE: call 9-1-1**

for more information:

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