

Naloxone information

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What is naloxone?

Naloxone is a type of medicine which temporarily reverses the effects of opioid overdose allowing the person to breathe again while help is on its way. Naloxone cannot be used to get high.

How do I get naloxone?

Naloxone comes in single-dose ampoules, a prefilled five dose syringe called Prenoxad, and a single dose nasal spray called Nyxoid. Naloxone can be prescribed by a doctor or you can buy it directly from a pharmacist. It is cheaper with a prescription. Some NSPs can help you get naloxone and train you how to use it.

Naloxone is available in three formulations:



AMPOULE



PRENOXAD®



NYXOID®

Who can carry naloxone?

It is legal for a person to carry naloxone that has been prescribed to them or they have bought at a pharmacist. It is legal for a non-medical person to administer naloxone to someone else to treat a potentially fatal overdose.

How do I store naloxone?

Naloxone is meant to be stored below 25 degrees. But you should always carry it with you if there is a chance you might use – and make sure anyone with you knows when and how to use it too.

Naloxone information

How long can I keep naloxone if I haven't used any of it?

Naloxone has a shelf-life of about two years. Check the expiry date and ask a doctor for a repeat script if you need one, ask at the NSP or buy new naloxone over the counter at a pharmacy. It's best to do this before it expires but if all you have is out of date naloxone and someone drops, use it.

How is naloxone administered?

Naloxone is injected into a muscle in the upper arm or outer thigh or, if using a nasal spray, into the nose. Additional doses can be given every two to three minutes (every four minutes if the person is pregnant) if they are unresponsive.

Can naloxone wear off before the drugs that caused the overdose?

Yes. Naloxone usually wears off in 30 to 90 minutes, and when this happens the person can stop breathing again unless more naloxone is available. There is more risk if they have taken other depressant drugs (like alcohol or benzodiazepines) as well as opioids. It's vital that help (000) is called for. If someone is given naloxone they should not be left alone and should be discouraged from using any drugs for at least two hours.

Are there risks associated with naloxone use?

There are very few risks associated with naloxone use. A very small number of people have hypersensitivity to naloxone.

Naloxone information

For more information, contact Penington Institute on 03 9650 0699 or visit penington.org.au