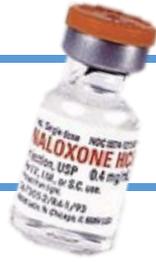


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# Narcan Fact Sheet

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## ***What is Narcan?***

Narcan is the trade name for the prescription medication naloxone. It reverses the effects of a heroin or prescription opioid overdose. It is an opioid antagonist. This means that it works by blocking the brain cell receptors that are activated by opioids like oxycodone, hydrocodone, and heroin.

## ***What are the side-effects or potential dangers of Narcan use?***

Narcan causes a person using opioids to enter an almost immediate withdrawal. The side effects of administration of naloxone are therefore opioid withdrawal symptoms. It is important to note that Narcan has no effect on non-opioid users and has no abuse potential.

## ***What does current research say about Narcan?***

Studies conducted nationally and here in Massachusetts have shown that overdose education and Narcan distribution have significantly lowered the number of opioid overdose deaths, up to 90% in some cases.

Research studies indicate that distribution of Narcan to opioid users is a cost effective intervention and increases average life spans. There is some preliminary evidence suggesting Narcan distribution is associated with reduced HIV risk behaviors.

Research also suggests that Narcan education and distribution may have an effect on decreasing drug use and increasing substance abuse treatment entries, even when these ideas were not advocated during the Narcan training.

## ***What is happening in our region with Narcan?***

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is currently offering free trainings on recognizing signs of overdose and Narcan administration (MGL c. 94c). Locally, the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod has trained over 1,200 people on Narcan use and at least 112 overdoses have been reversed.

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Governor Deval Patrick declared a public health emergency in Massachusetts regarding opioid abuse. This action allows all emergency first responders, including police and firefighters, to carry and administer Narcan.



## ***For More Information***

- To hear recorded information on how to prevent, recognize, and respond to an opioid overdose, call: **(800) 383-2437**
- For questions about the DPH narcan distribution pilot, contact Sarah Ruiz at **(617) 624-5136** or at [Sarah.Ruiz@state.ma.us](mailto:Sarah.Ruiz@state.ma.us)
- For information on where to get Narcan and referrals for alcohol and other drug abuse problems and related concerns, call: Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Hotline: **(800) 327-5050, TTY (888) 448-8321**

## ***Local Resources***

### **Narcan Training and Distribution:**

#### **AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod - Hyannis**

428 South Street, Hyannis  
(866) 990-2437 or (508) 778-1954

#### **Aids Support Group of Cape Cod – Provincetown**

336 Commercial Street, Unit # 10  
(866) 668-6448 or (508)487-8311

### **Learn to Cope**

Support group for families dealing with addiction - Meets Tuesdays at 7pm  
Yarmouth Police Station  
1 Brad Erickson Way, Yarmouth  
[www.learn2cope.org](http://www.learn2cope.org)

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- Walley, A. Y., & al, e. (2013). Opioid overdose rates and implementation of overdose education and nasal naloxone distribution in Massachusetts. *British Medical Journal*.

