



Opioid Overdose Prevention & Reversal Project

Opioids are a highly addictive class of drugs that includes pain relievers such as oxycodone, codeine, morphine and fentanyl, street drugs such as heroin, as well as methadone used to treat opioid addiction. Overdose from opioids is a growing cause of death in Vermont. To save lives, the Vermont Department of Health is distributing a medication called nasal naloxone hydrochloride, also known by the trade name Narcan[®], that can reverse an opioid overdose.

Nasal Naloxone (also known as Narcan[®])

In an overdose, opioids can slow breathing to the point of death. Naloxone, when sprayed into the nose of someone who has overdosed, blocks the opioids and restores normal breathing. The key is to administer it as quickly as possible after an overdose is recognized. Naloxone is safe, easy to administer, and has no potential for abuse.

How does the program work?

The Vermont Department of Health has partnered with several community-based organizations to distribute overdose rescue kits containing nasal naloxone. Individuals can get prevention and overdose response training designed and approved by the department at these distribution sites. The department plans to add sites at several of the regional treatment hubs.

Find a site at: <http://healthvermont.gov/adap/treatment/naloxone>

Vermont Law (18 VSA § 4240 (c)) allows health care professionals acting in good faith to prescribe, dispense and distribute an opioid antagonist to a person who is at risk of overdose – or to a family member, friend or other person in a position to help – so long as the recipient of the opioid antagonist has completed a prevention and treatment training program approved by the Vermont Department of Health. Unless acting recklessly, with gross negligence or intentional misconduct, a health professional who prescribes, dispenses or distributes an opioid antagonist under this section shall be immune from civil or criminal liability, regardless of whether the opioid antagonist was administered by or to the person for whom it was provided.