

SAMHSA

Opioid Overdose Prevention

TOOLKIT

Recovering From Opioid Overdose



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

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RECOVERING FROM OPIOID OVERDOSE

RESOURCES FOR OVERDOSE SURVIVORS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

Survivors of opioid overdose have experienced a life-changing and traumatic event. They have had to deal with the emotional consequences of overdosing, which can involve embarrassment, guilt, anger, and gratitude, all accompanied by the discomfort of opioid withdrawal. Most need the support of family and friends to take the next steps toward recovery.

While many factors can contribute to opioid overdose, it is almost always an accident. Moreover, the underlying problem that led to opioid use—most often pain or substance use disorder—still exists and continues to require attention.¹

The individual who has experienced an overdose is not the only one who has endured a traumatic event. Family members often feel judged or inadequate because they could not prevent the overdose. It is important for family members to work together to help the overdose survivor obtain the help that he or she needs.

FINDING A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

As with any health condition, it is not a sign of weakness to admit that a person or a family cannot deal with overdose and its associated issues without help. It takes real courage to reach out to others for support and to connect with members of the community to get help.

Health care providers, including those who specialize in treating substance use disorders, can provide structured, therapeutic support and feedback.

If the survivor's underlying problem is pain, referral to a pain specialist may be in order. If it is addiction, the patient should be referred to an addiction specialist for assessment and treatment by a physician specializing in the treatment of opioid addiction in a residential treatment program or in a federally certified opioid treatment program. In each case, counseling can help the individual manage his or her problems in a healthier way. The path to recovery can be a dynamic and challenging process, but there are ways to help.

In addition to receiving support from family and friends, overdose survivors can access a variety of community-based organizations and institutions, such as:

- Health care and behavioral health providers.
- Peer-to-peer recovery support groups such as Narcotics Anonymous.
- Faith-based organizations.
- Educational institutions.
- Neighborhood groups.
- Government agencies.
- Family and community support programs.

RECOVERING FROM OPIOID OVERDOSE

RESOURCES

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or 1-800-487-4889 (TDD, for hearing impaired)
- Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator (search by address, city, or ZIP Code): <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>
- Buprenorphine Treatment Practitioner Locator (search by address, city, or ZIP Code): <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/physician-program-data/treatment-physician-locator>
- Single State Agencies for Substance Abuse Services: <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ssa-directory.pdf>
- State Opioid Treatment Authorities: <https://dpt2.samhsa.gov/regulations/smalist.aspx>
- SAMHSA Publications Ordering (all SAMHSA Store products are available at no charge): <https://store.samhsa.gov>; 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Understanding the Epidemic: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic>
- Poisoning: <https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/poisoning>
- CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/guideline.html>

Faces & Voices of Recovery

- Shaping the Future of Recovery: <https://facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/>

Project Lazarus

- Learn About the Project Lazarus Model: <https://www.projectlazarus.org>

Harm Reduction Coalition

- Main Page: <http://www.harmreduction.org>

Prevent & Protect

- Tools for conducting overdose prevention and naloxone advocacy, outreach, and communication campaigns: <http://prevent-protect.org/community-resources-1/>

Prescribe to Prevent

- Prescribe Naloxone, Save a Life: <http://prescribetoprevent.org>

SAMHSA does not specifically endorse any group, and appropriateness should be determined at the local level. Many groups are appropriate for loved ones and family members. Referrals are encouraged to groups that have received explicit endorsements from those who have been intimately affected by opioid use and overdose.

- Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing is for those who have lost a loved one: <http://grasphelp.org/>.
- Learn 2 Cope is for families with loved ones who have a substance use disorder: <https://www.learn2cope.org/>.
- The International Overdose Awareness Day website has a list of worldwide events: <https://www.overdoseday.com/>.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Kampman, K, Jarvis M. American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) National Practice Guideline for the use of medications in the treatment of addiction involving opioid use. *J Addict Med.* 2015;9(5):358-67. doi:10.1097/ADM.0000000000000166

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