

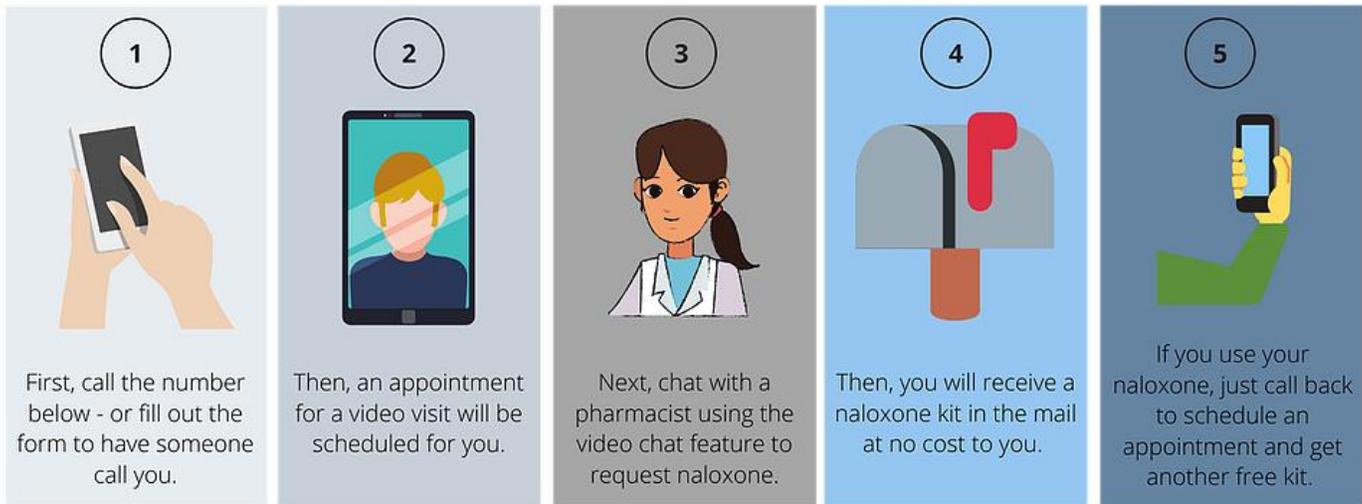


EFR EMPLOYEE & FAMILY RESOURCES

## Naloxone for Personal Use in Iowa: A Quick Guide

As of July 2020, Iowa pharmacies can dispense specific versions of naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal drug, to anyone “in a position to assist”<sup>1</sup> at no cost to the patient without a prescription. Currently, NARCAN, a naloxone nasal spray, is the product available at no cost. Opioid overdose deaths rose 36% in Iowa in 2020,<sup>2</sup> and we all have a role in combatting the overdose crisis. Having NARCAN on hand is a key strategy.<sup>3</sup>

**Where do I find free NARCAN?** Iowans can find local pharmacies participating in the program in [this directory](#) at [naloxoneiowa.org](http://naloxoneiowa.org). Other pharmacies may participate but aren't included in this directory. Ask at any pharmacy if they use voucher reimbursements to get NARCAN at no cost to you. [Naloxoneiowa.org/telenaloxone](http://Naloxoneiowa.org/telenaloxone) includes instructions on [getting NARCAN sent to you](#) starting with calling 319-678-7825 or visiting the website:



Ask the pharmacist for two boxes (four doses) if you are in a position to assist someone who uses illegal drugs. Some synthetic opioids (like fentanyl) being found in the drug supply are 50-500 times the strength of heroin, meaning, one NARCAN dose may not be enough to counteract the amount of opioids in the brain. [Watch an instructional video](#) on [naloxoneiowa.org](http://naloxoneiowa.org) or [NARCAN.com](http://NARCAN.com) to know when to administer a second dose, but in some cases it may take more than two. There are also written instructions in the box with pictures.

<sup>1</sup> [Naloxone Access in Iowa 2021](#). IDPH, September 2021.

<sup>2</sup> [“Iowa drug overdose deaths jumped 20% last year, amid pandemic's stress and the spread of fentanyl.”](#) Tony Leys, *Des Moines Register*, updated July 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Information in this guide is pulled from Iowa Department of Public Health materials. Please reach out to Gabbie Ruggiero ([guggiero@EFR.org](mailto:guggiero@EFR.org)) for specific sources and/or more information.



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**How do I use NARCAN?** First, determine if someone is experiencing an opioid overdose. If someone isn't experiencing an opioid overdose, administering NARCAN will not harm them. Review an instructional video (see above). Always call 911 immediately after administering NARCAN. NARCAN stays in the body for less time than opioids, meaning, someone could go back into overdose after the NARCAN wears off. Store in the original packaging at room temperature away from light.

Under the Influence	Overdose
Muscles become relaxed	<b>Deep snoring/gurgling (death rattle) or wheezing</b>
Speech is slowed/slurred	<b>Blue tinge</b> lips, fingers, under eyes
Flushed or normal skin tones	Pale, <b>clammy skin</b>
Responds to stimulation like yelling, sternum rub, pinching, etc.	Heavy nod, <b>will not respond to stimulation</b> , altered level of consciousness, unconsciousness
Nodding out	<b>Slow, irregular breathing, no/faint pulse</b>
Sleepy looking	<b>Pinpoint pupils</b>

### KEY STEPS TO ADMINISTERING NARCAN® NASAL SPRAY:

#### PEEL



Peel back the package to remove the device. Hold the device with your thumb on the bottom of the plunger and 2 fingers on the nozzle.

#### PLACE



Place and hold the tip of the nozzle in either nostril until your fingers touch the bottom of the patient's nose.

#### PRESS



Press the plunger firmly to release the dose into the patient's nose.

**Can I overdose administering NARCAN?** There has been misinformation spread that you can overdose if you touch fentanyl while administering NARCAN. This is *not* true (if you're interested in learning more on this topic, please reference a University of Iowa toxicologist: [iowaharmreductioncoalition.org/fentanyl-separating-fact-from-fiction/](http://iowaharmreductioncoalition.org/fentanyl-separating-fact-from-fiction/)). It never hurts to have gloves with the NARCAN in case folks opt to use them, and in any case this is best practice when administering first aid.

Through a State Opioid Response grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health, **Employee & Family Resources provides community education on overdose prevention**, including the stigma of addiction, stimulant and opioid use, NARCAN use, and harm reduction. For more information on these topics or to get involved in community prevention efforts, please contact: **Gabbie Ruggiero**, she/hers  
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