

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NALOXONE TO SAVE LIVES



Many law enforcement agencies now carry the drug naloxone, which gives officers a way to reverse a heroin, or other opioid, overdose. The drug can be injected into a muscle or administered as a nasal spray.

Being rescued by a police officer instead of being arrested can be an extremely powerful thing. It literally changes how people think about the police. The number of opiate overdoses from heroin, oxycodone, and hydrocodone, etc., have dramatically increased nationwide. As a result law enforcement executives recognize the importance of better equipping their first responders with this life-saving drug. Those first few minutes can be the difference between life and death.



1 KEEP NALOXONE ACCESSIBLE

Naloxone is a low-risk, easy-to-administer life-saving antidote to overdose from heroin or other opiates that has already been used to save thousands of lives. It is capable of reducing opioid overdose deaths by as much as 50 percent when combined with proper training and distribution.



2 QUICK TREATMENT SAVES LIVES

The faster naloxone is administered the greater the odds it will save the life of someone experiencing an opioid overdose. In many communities, the police are the first emergency personnel to arrive at the scene of life-threatening emergencies such as opioid overdoses.



3 TRAIN OFFICERS TO USE NALOXONE

The use of naloxone by police first responders has repeatedly proven effective at saving the lives of overdosed individuals in communities where naloxone policies were in place, officers were trained and naloxone was distributed to them.



4 TELL THE COMMUNITY THAT OFFICERS ARE EQUIPPED TO SAVE OVERDOSE VICTIMS

When the police employ a first responder naloxone strategy, it can increase their legitimacy in the eyes of the communities they serve.



5 NALOXONE IS NOT AN ENTRY DRUG

There is no evidence that first responder use of naloxone to revive people experiencing an opioid overdose encourages or enables drug addiction.

This document is intended to give your agency the knowledge it needs to save lives and to improve community relationships. Police departments in Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont that are currently using the life-saving drug have reported the toughest problem to overcome was persuading drug users, their friends, and family that they will not get arrested if they call 911 to get help for an overdose. However, once they were able to overcome that hurdle, the relationship between the police and the community was significantly changed, including bringing hope back to the drug community. The departments report more compassion and respect going both ways.

