Naloxone

What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is a life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Opioids include methadone, morphine, oxycodone, fentanyl, hydromorphone, buprenorphine and heroin.

Naloxone nasal spray can be used in the case of a known or suspected opioid overdose where the person is unresponsive, not breathing or unconscious. It temporarily blocks the action of opioids and reverses opioid overdose allowing the person to breathe again 2-3 minutes later (recommended time to provide 2nd dose).

It is legal for a non-medical person to give naloxone nasal spray to someone else to treat a potentially fatal opioid overdose.

Signs of opioid overdose

Someone experiencing an opioid overdose may:

- be unresponsive to touch or sounds
- have irregular/shallow breathing or no breathing at all
- make snoring/gurgling noises
- have blue lips, if pale-skinned, or look grey or ashen, if dark-skinned
- go limp and floppy
- possibly vomit.

If you cannot get a response from someone, do not assume they are asleep. Unusual, or deep, snoring is a common sign of overdose and sometimes it can take hours for people to die of an overdose. Don't leave people to "sleep it off".

How to use Naloxone?

1. Call 000 for emergency assistance immediately.
2. Lay the person on their back to receive a dose of Naloxone Nasal Spray
3. Insert the nasal spray into one nostril and press the plunger until it clicks.
4. Lay the person in the recovery position to prevent choking.
5. If there is no response after 2-3 minutes, give them a second dose (every 4 minutes for pregnant women).
6. Stay with them until emergency workers arrive.

Do not leave them alone and discourage them from using any more opioids for at least two hours.

Blood-Borne Virus Awareness

Needle and Syringe Program

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The BBVAware Program is supported by the Crown through the Department of Health Tasmania.