



Opioid Epidemic and the Fentanyl Crisis

Lena Orcutt, BSN, RN, District Co-lead, FHS, PHS School Nurse

Agenda

- ▶ What are opioids
- ▶ What is fentanyl - The 3rd wave of the Opioid Crisis
- ▶ State Statistics
- ▶ Counterfeit Pills
- ▶ Vaping, Dab pens
- ▶ How can you reverse an overdose?

Opioids



- ▶ Oxycodone (Oxycontin, Percocet)
- ▶ Hydrocodone (Vicodin)
- ▶ Alprazolam (Xanax)
- ▶ Amphetamines (Adderall)

Effects of Opioids

- Effects

- Euphoria
- Sedation
- Sleepiness
- Pain relief
- Cough suppression
- Decreased anxiety
- Constipation
- Respiratory depression



- Tolerance

- Develops quickly with pain and euphoric effects
- Does not develop at same rate with respiratory depression
- Fentanyl potency is extremely unpredictable
 - Effects are felt quickly and do not last very long (about 30–60 minutes)
 - People consume it multiple times a day to stave off withdrawal symptoms

A young man with dark hair, wearing a dark baseball cap and a dark long-sleeved sweatshirt, stands behind a dark table. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. His hands are resting on the table in front of him. The background is dark and out of focus.

NH

DEAD ON ARRIVAL for youth

a short film on the dangers of fentanyl
for kids from award-winning
documentary filmmaker



WATCH NOW

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4ltaeqqvY>

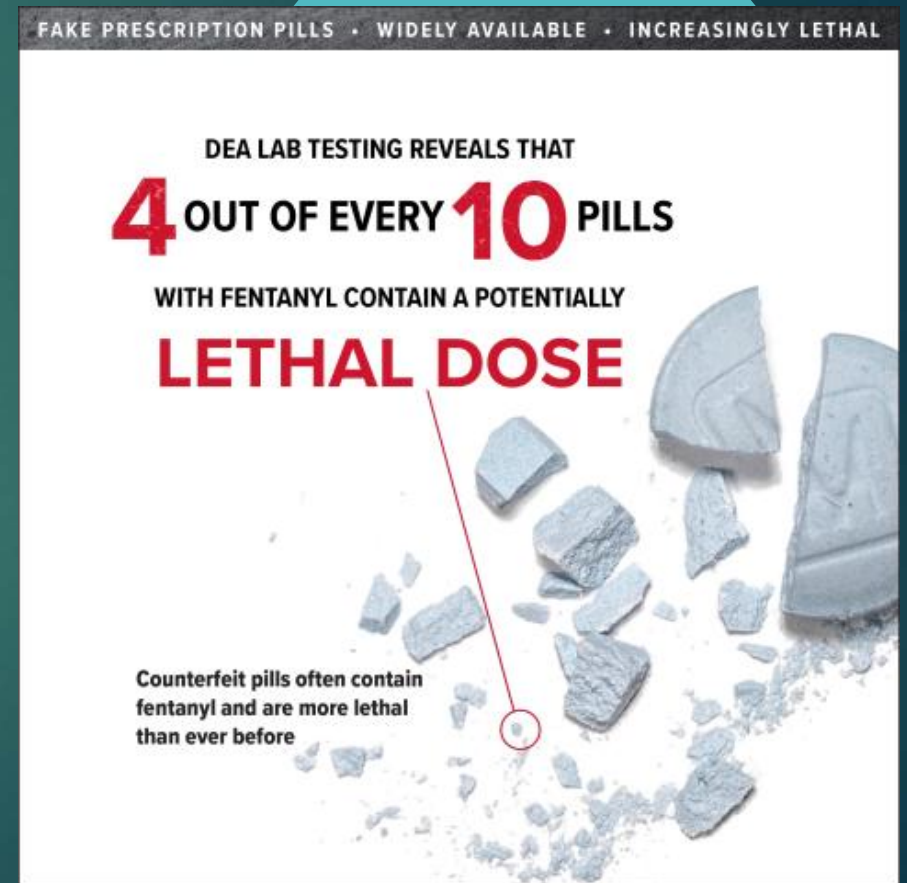
Fentanyl

**40,010 fentanyl overdose deaths
(2021)**

#1 killer for people age 18-45

More than:

- Car accidents (22,442)
- Suicide (21,678)
- COVID (21,335)
- Cancer (17,114)

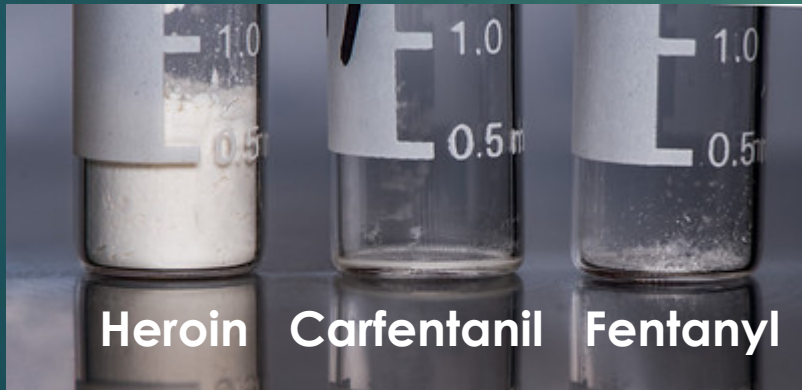


Youth and Fentanyl



- 2020 there was a 560% increase in overdose deaths fueled by fentanyl (CDC)
- Fentanyl is being mixed with other drugs, such as cocaine, oxycodone, Xanax and Adderall
- Criminal drug networks are flooding the market with fake pills
- Kids aren't intentionally looking for fentanyl, and they're unaware it's been added to the substances they're seeking
- As a result, kids are being poisoned by fentanyl at a staggering rate

How lethal is Fentanyl?



Synthetic opioid 80-100 times stronger than morphine, 50 times stronger than heroin

Prescription & illegally

Cheap => Used to cut other drugs

Pressed pills, powders, crystalline substances

560% increase; 41% of all OD deaths

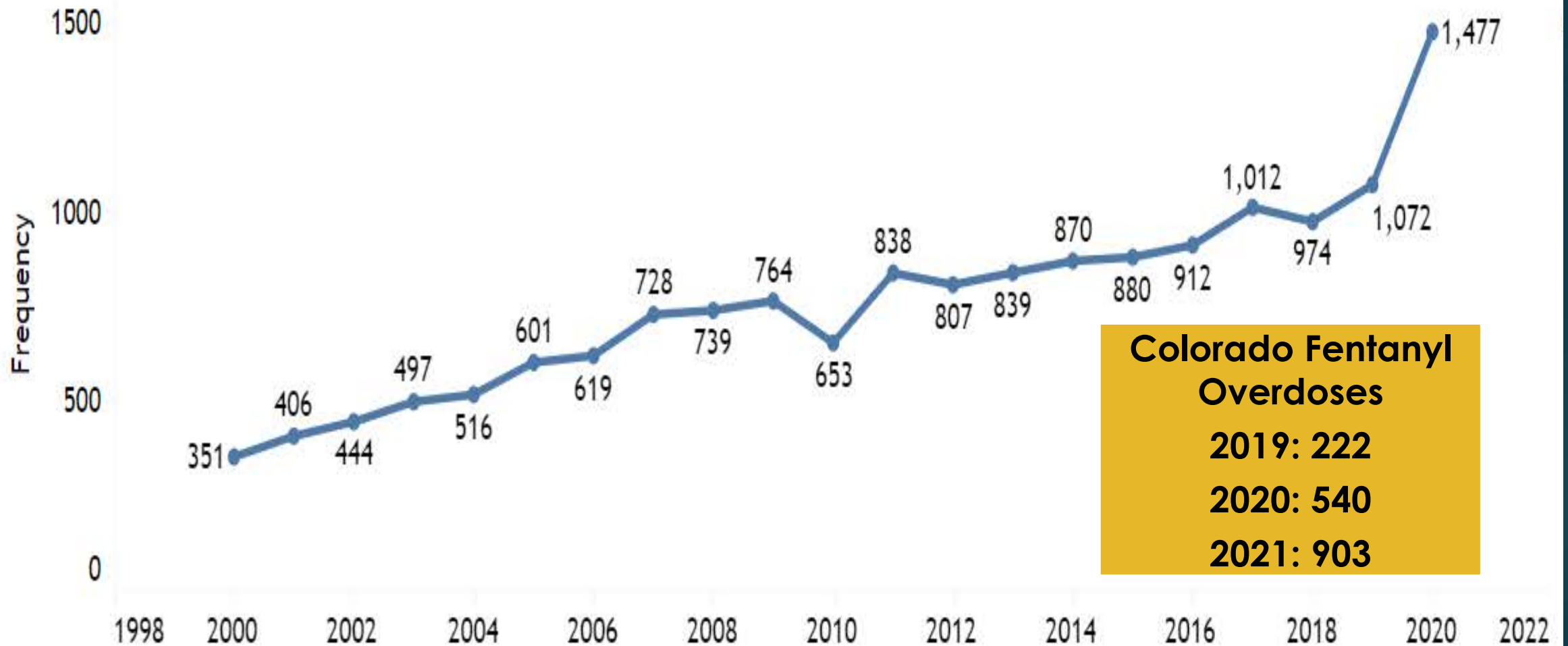
~136 people die every day from an opioid overdose in the US

1 kilo has the potential to end 500,000 lives

DEA: 2 out of every 5 pills contain a potentially lethal dose

"Nitazenes" – protonitazene & isotonitazene

Total number of drug overdose deaths due to any drug per year



- ▶ Methadone.....5
- ▶ Heroin.....36
- ▶ Oxycodone.....19
- ▶ Hydrocodone.....3
- ▶ Methadone5
- ▶ **Fentanyl.....99**

▶ In 2020 there were a total of 47 deaths related to fentanyl.

▶ TOTAL Drug related deaths: 227 up from 186 in 2020

2021 El Paso
County
Coroner
Drug
Related
accidental
death
report

Counterfeit Pills



- Fake prescription pills are easily accessible and often sold on social media or dark web
- Levels of fentanyl vary widely per batch because manufactured in garages or warehouses in Mexico
- Street names: hillybilly heroin, percs, blues or mexis
- Crushed, put powder on foil, and heat (\$1-\$13/pill in 2020-2022)
- Often contain fentanyl or methamphetamine, made to look like prescription opioids such as:
 - Oxycodone (Oxycontin®, Percocet®)
 - Hydrocodone (Vicodin®)
 - Alprazolam (Xanax®) – in CO only 5% of DEA-purchased pills since 2017 are actually Xanax without fentanyl
 - Stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall®)

Vaping and Dab Pens

▶ Do you know what is in your vape or Dab Pen?

- ▶ Whoever is lacing marijuana cartridges likely is doing so by creating their own mix of THC and fentanyl and filling empty cartridges they bought online, then packaging them to look like vape pens that are legally purchased at dispensaries, he said.
- ▶ “Those under 21 who can’t buy legally see the packaging and think it’s legit,” Smith said.



https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/Fentanyl%20Used%20in%20Vape%20Pens_PRB%20FINAL.pdf
<https://kdvr.com/news/local/fentanyl-vaping-overdose-teens/>
<https://filtermag.org/fentanyl-marijuana-myth/>

Rainbow Fentanyl



Safe handling of suspected Fentanyl

- Wear a mask, N-95 recommended
- Wear gloves- thicker the better (higher MIL)
- Wear goggles
- Fentanyl can enter the body through inhalation and is transdermal
- Secondary exposures are a concern
- If it is on your hands and you accidentally touch a mucus gland (eyes, mouth, nose, etc...) fentanyl can enter the body



Skin Exposure Treatment



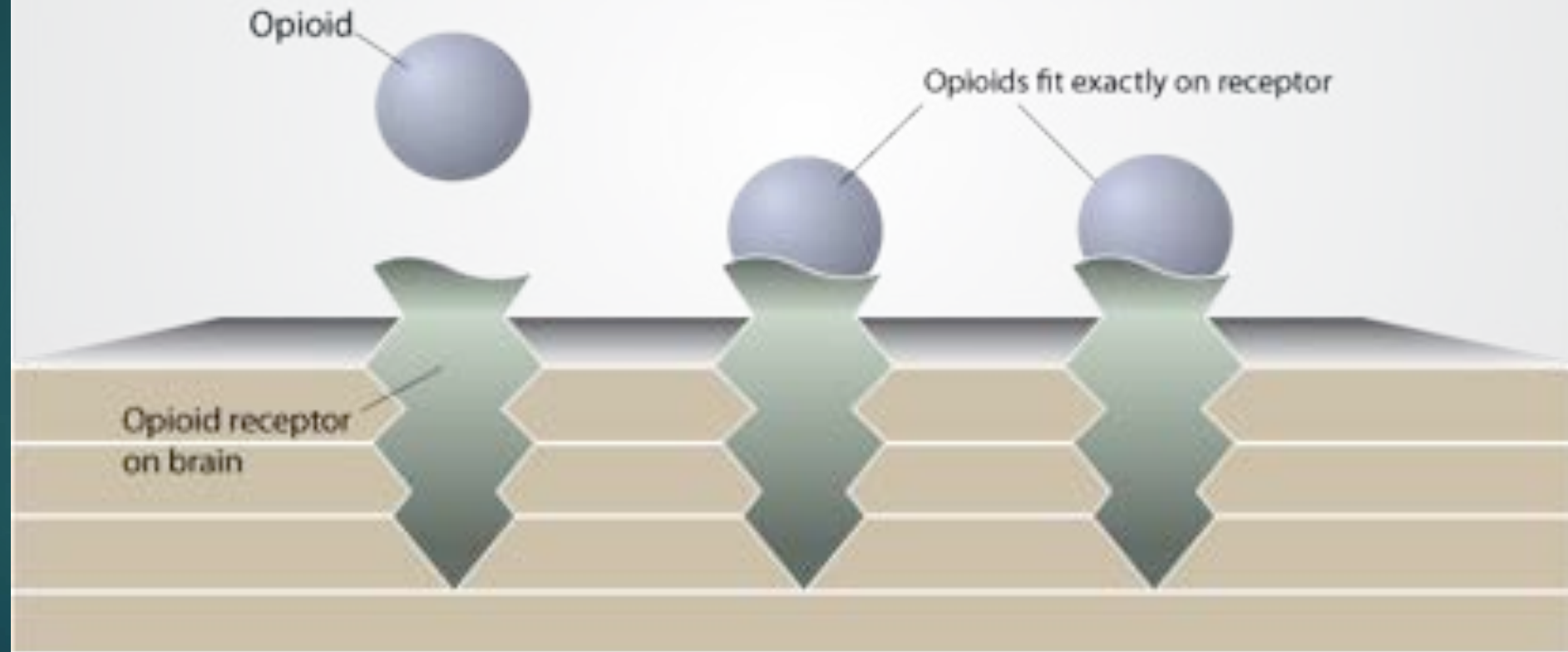
- Rinse the exposed skin with cold water.
- DO NOT use a wipe or alcohol-based cleaner.
 - Will open your pores
- Wash with soap and water (cold).
 - Hot water will open your pores

Naloxone (Narcan) Overdose Reversal Medication



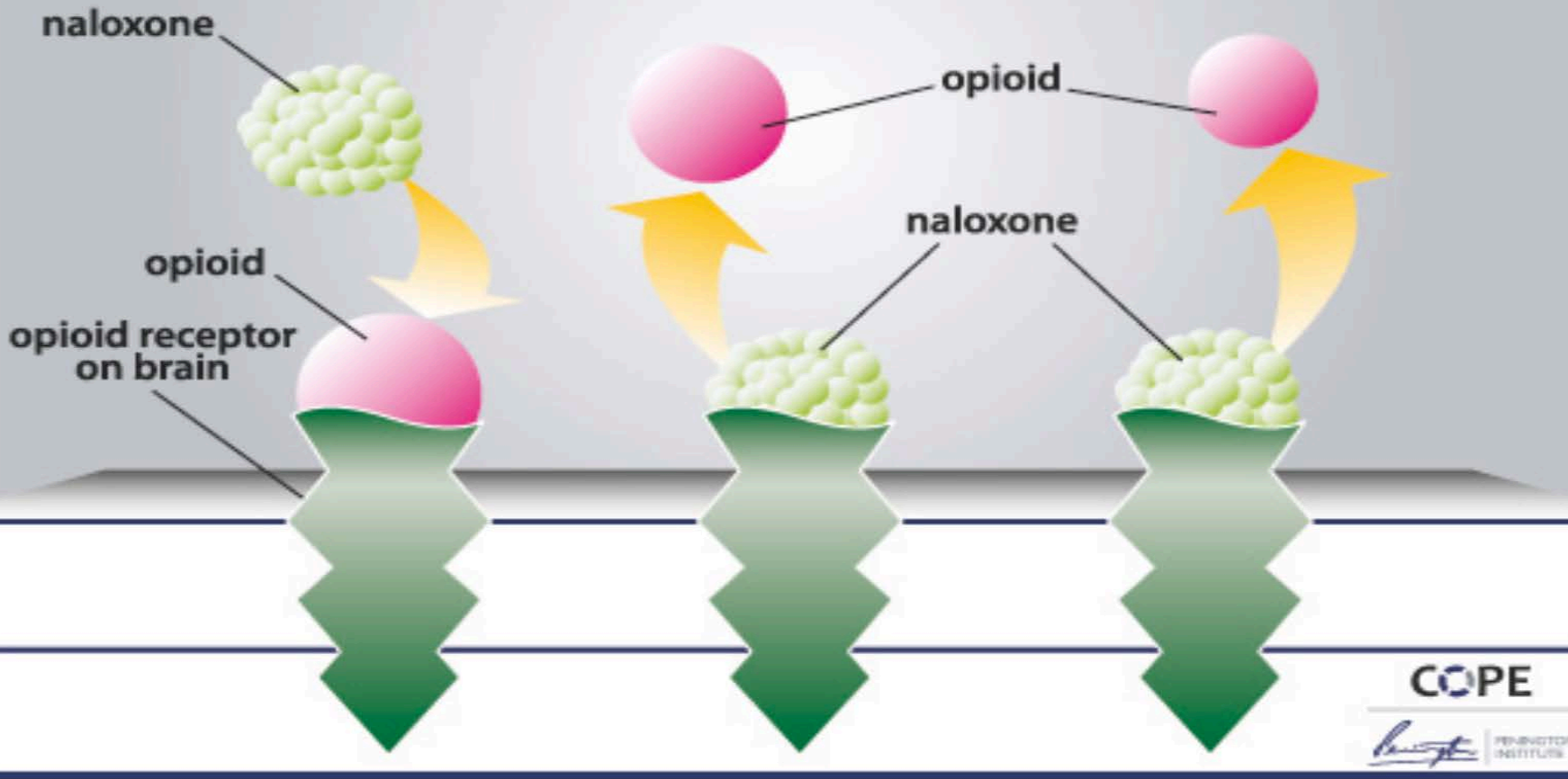
What is an opioid overdose ?

The brain has many, many receptors for opioids. An overdose occurs when too much of any opioid, like heroin or Oxycontin, fits in too many receptors slowing and then stopping the breathing.



Naloxone reversing an overdose

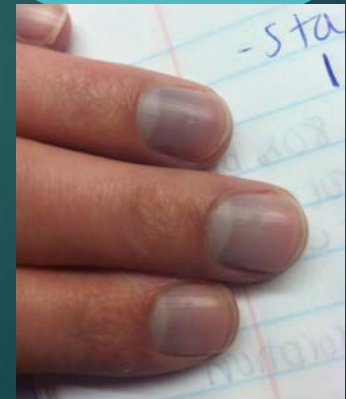
Naloxone has a stronger affinity to the opioid receptors than opioids, such as heroin or oxycodone, so it knocks the opioids off the receptors for a short time (30-90 minutes). This allows the person to breathe again and reverse the overdose.



Source: Adapted diagram from *Guide To Developing and Managing Overdose Prevention and Take-Home Naloxone Projects* <http://harmreduction.org/our-work/overdose-prevention/>

Symptoms of an Opioid Overdose

- Shallow or slow breathing (“death rattle”)
- Lips and nails turning blue
- Slow heart rate or low blood pressure
- Cool, clammy skin – usually ashen or pale in color
- Pinpoint pupils
- Unable to talk – not responsive
- Loss of consciousness
- Body is limp and heavy



If You Suspect an Overdose



- Call the person's name to wake them up
- Shout "Narcan" or "I'm calling the police!"
- If still unresponsive, try a sternal rub
 - ▶ Rub your knuckles up and down their breastbone while applying pressure
- Call 911 (Good Samaritan Law)
 - ▶ It is important to stay with an overdose victim until help arrives



Naloxone Auto pumps

▶ Administration of Narcan/Kloxxado:

- Provide support to back of neck to allow head to tilt back
- Spray once into 1 nostril (insert until your fingers are touching tip of nose)
- Wait 2-3 minutes
- Do rescue breathing if needed during this time
- If person has not revived, administer 2nd spray in opposite nostril

▶ Important:

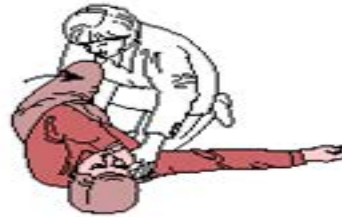
- 1 dose per bottle
- Do **NOT** prime
- You can **NOT** hurt someone by giving them naloxone
- Naloxone lasts 30-90 minutes
- Make sure that the person does NOT take more opioids and gets medical assistance

Recovery Position

Once the person is breathing without help, put them into recovery position



1. Kneel next to the person. Place the arm closest to you straight out from the body. Position the far arm with the back of the hand against the near cheek.



2. Grab and bend the person's far knee.



3. Protecting the head with one hand, gently roll the person toward you by pulling the far knee over and to the ground.



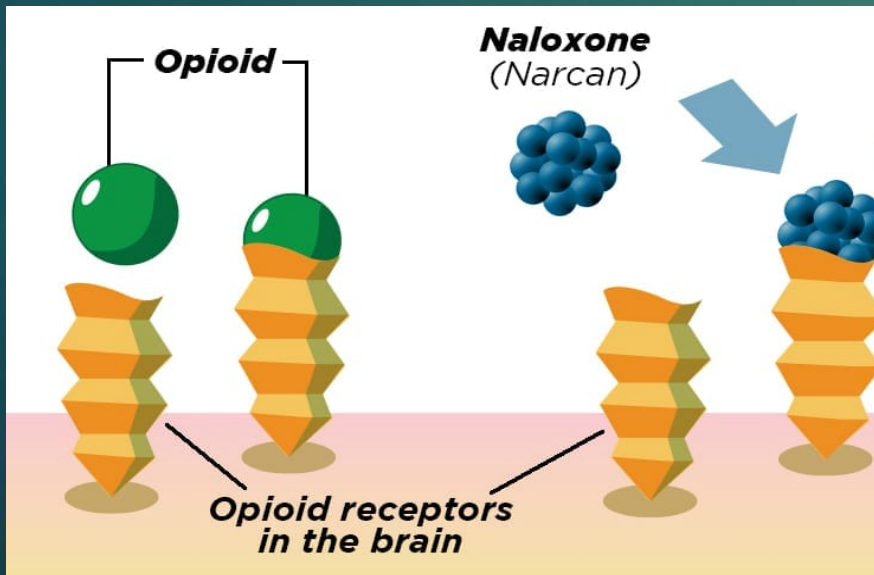
4. Tilt the head up slightly so that the airway is open. Make sure that the hand is under the cheek. Place a blanket or coat over the person (unless he or she has a heat illness or fever) and stay close until help arrives.

Symptoms of Hydrocodone Withdrawal

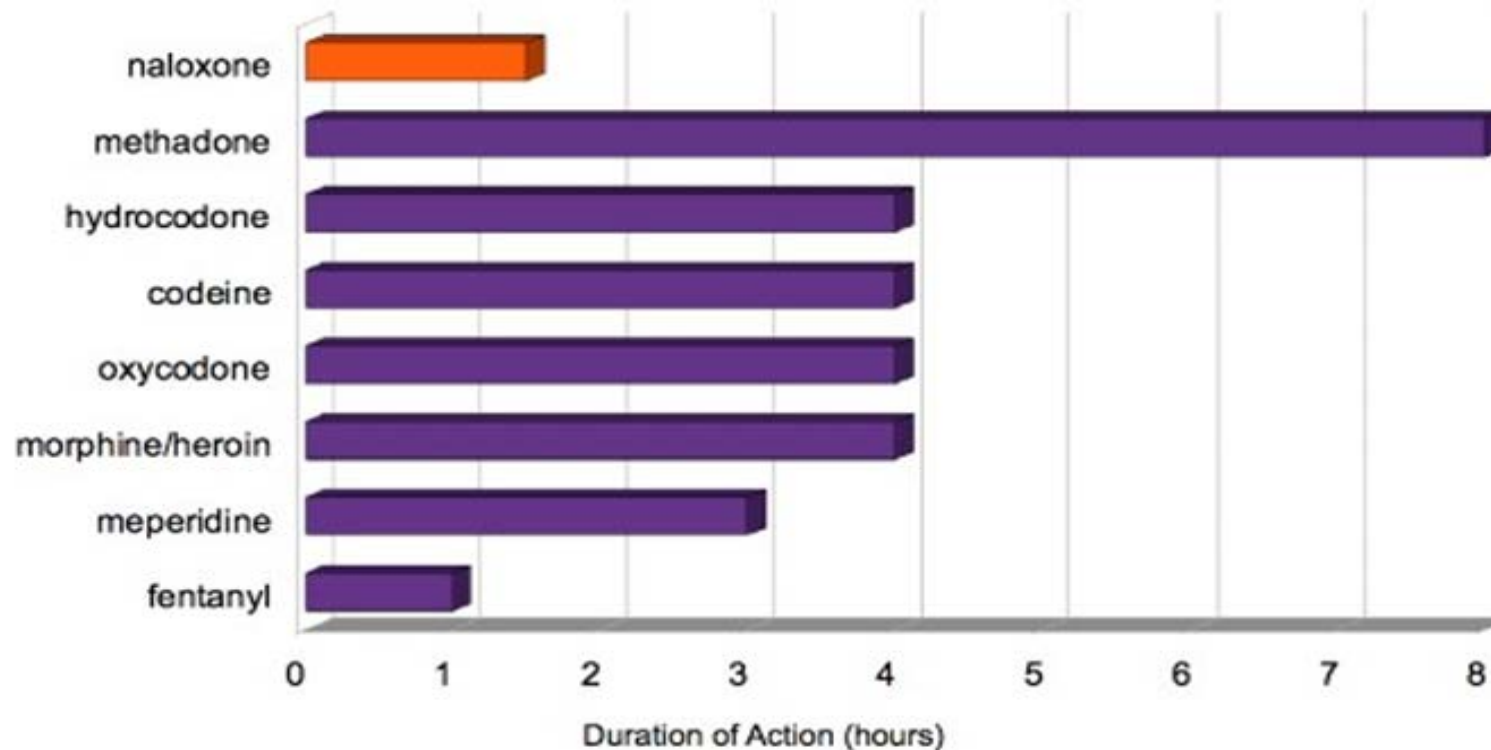


Opioid Withdrawal

- ▶ Upon awakening, patient will be in opioid withdrawal:
 - ▶ Agitation or combativeness, or severe depression
 - ▶ Nausea/vomiting
 - ▶ Chills
 - ▶ Sweating
 - ▶ Body aches
 - ▶ Diarrhea
 - ▶ Goosebumps
 - ▶ Changes in blood pressure (usually increase)
 - ▶ Disoriented
- ▶ Tell the person about the overdose and use of Narcan
 - ▶ Emphasize importance of NOT using to combat withdrawal symptoms
 - ▶ Transport patient for medical care immediately



Successful Reversals Need Ongoing Medical Observation



Duration of action of naloxone compared with common opioids

Brenner GM, Stevens CW Pharmacology. Philadelphia, PA:
Saunders/Elsevier; 2010. **Graphic: courtesy of NOPE-RI**

Liability Protections

Senate Bill 20, the 911 Good Samaritan law

- ▶ Signed into law in May of 2012
- ▶ Provides **legal immunity** from prosecution for small amounts of drugs and paraphernalia to individuals who call 911 in response to an overdose emergency.
- ▶ **Prohibits the arrest and criminal prosecution** of anyone, including the individual who experiences an overdose, from certain specified offenses that arise from the same course of events as the emergency

Stipulations:

- ▶ **Report** an emergency drug or alcohol overdose to law enforcement or 911
- ▶ Must **stay** at the scene of the overdose until law enforcement or an emergency medical responder arrives
- ▶ **Identify yourself** and **cooperate** with law enforcement or the emergency medical responder

**Calling for
help shouldn't
be a crime.**

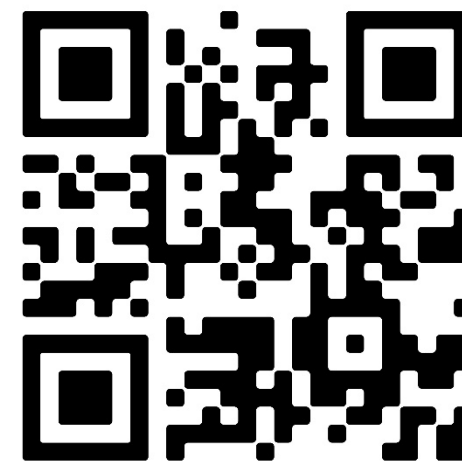


OpiRescue



Free app for smartphones

- Look for signs of opioid overdose
- How to use naloxone (all forms)
- How to find treatment
- Where to get naloxone near you



Download OpiRescue

Local Resources

- ▶ Sandstone Care ph: 720-674-7500
Web address: sandstonecare.com
- ▶ Adult Youth Services ph: 719-442-1779
Web address: adultyouthservices.com
- ▶ Colorado Community Health Alliance (accepts Medicaid).
ph: 719-598-1540 Web address: cchacares.com
- ▶ Other Resources can be found at Helping Hands El Paso County Community Resources website
<https://research.ppld.org/c.php?g=527775&p=7318785>

Questions?



Resources

- ▶ Presentation adapted from Fentanyl: 3rd Wave of the Opioid Crisis by Lindsey Simbeye, External Relations Strategist at CU Anschutz, Center for prescription Drug Abuse Prevention