



# Compassionate Overdose Response



Responding to an overdose can be overwhelming and scary, but you can do it! This is a quick guide on how to compassionately respond to an overdose.

## 1 Check For Responsiveness

- Shake the person and shout (their name, wake up, etc.)
- Use the sternal rub
  - Make a fist
  - Use the middle joints of your fingers (not the knuckles)
  - Firmly rub the center of the person's chest for 5-10 second to wake them up

## 2 Call 911 Yell For Help

- If unresponsive, call 911
- Stay with the person

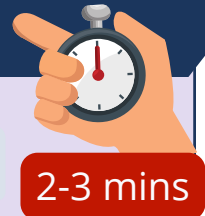
**Tip!**  
The 911 operator will guide you in overdose response! Put the call on speaker phone to make responding easier to follow

## 3 Administer Opioid Overdose Reversal Medication (naloxone, Narcan)

- Naloxone counters the effects of an opioid overdose. Follow steps on the product to administer opioid overdose reversal medication
- Go to step 4 while you wait 2-3 minutes for naloxone take affect
- If no response after 2-3 minutes, give another dose of naloxone, and repeat step 4



Scan or [click here](#) to learn more about using nasal or injectable naloxone from the CDC



Naloxone won't harm someone if they're overdosing on other drugs, so it's always best to use it if you think someone is overdosing

If you do not have naloxone still continue with all other steps

Rescue breathing and CPR can save someone's life until EMS arrives

## 4 Check For Pulse and Breathing Perform CPR (if trained) or Rescue Breaths

- Turn the page to review the Rescue Breathing Guide
- If you do not have additional naloxone, continue with rescue breathing or CPR

## 5 Place In Recovery Position

- Roll them into a recovery position to prevent choking, especially if you have to leave (turn the page to review recovery positioning)
- Naloxone's effect lasts for about 30-90 minutes. Once the naloxone wears off, there is a potential for a person to go into an overdose again. If possible, stay with the person until EMS arrives



# Compassionate Overdose Response Rescue Breathing Guide

Rescue breathing is one of the most important steps in responding to an overdose. Opioids and other depressants reduce respiratory function. Enabling breathing as quickly as possible is critical to saving lives. Naloxone helps to restore breathing, but takes a couple of minutes to work. Rescue breathing gets much needed air immediately into someone's body and can save lives.

If interested in CPR training, please scan or [click here](#) to visit the American Heart Association



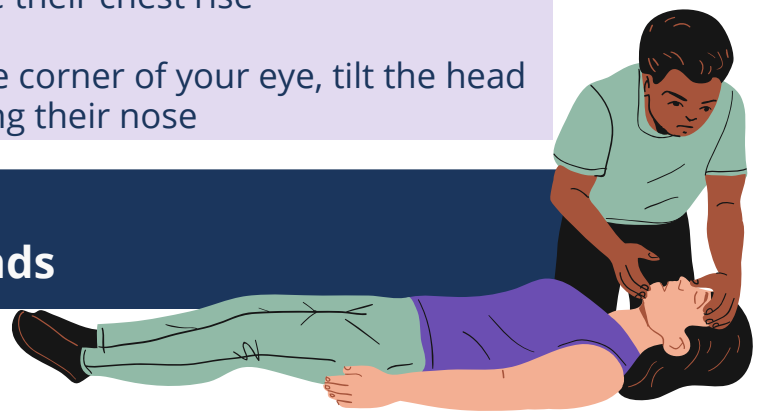
**1 Place the person on their back**

**2 Tilt their chin up and head back  
Open their mouth and check for any blockages**

**3 Plug their nose with one hand, make a seal with your mouth, and give two regular-sized breaths**

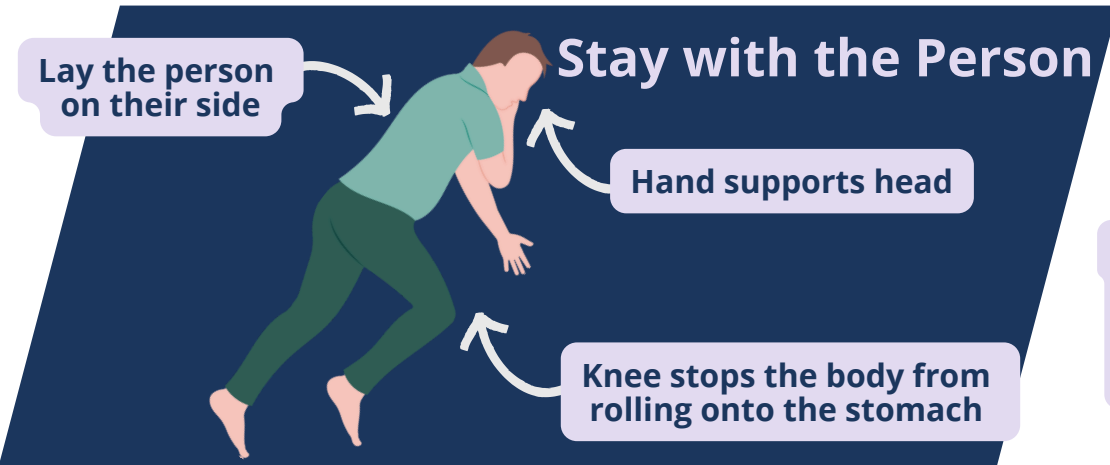
- Blow enough air into their lungs to make their chest rise
- If you don't see their chest rise out of the corner of your eye, tilt the head back more and make sure you're plugging their nose

**4 Continue to give breaths  
Give one breath every 5 seconds**



Tennessee Department of Health Authorization No. 360044.  
This Electronic publication was promulgated at zero cost.  
May 2024

## Recovery Position



Roll them into a recovery position on their side

Naloxone's effect wears off after about 30 to 90 minutes so it's critical that someone stays with person as they recover as there is a potential they could overdose again