

# WHAT CAN PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS DO?

## Learn about the issue.

The opioid crisis has brought to light the devastating effects opioids are having on individuals, families and communities across Canada. Illegal drugs with fentanyl added to them are causing many of the opioid-related harms and deaths. However, prescription opioids have also contributed to the crisis. While opioids offer benefits, they also come with risks.

Click the links below to learn more about the opioid crisis, what opioids are, and the difference between prescription and illegal opioids.

[Canada's opioid crisis \(Fact sheet\) - Canada.ca](#)

[Opioids: What Are They? \(Fact sheet\) - Canada.ca](#)

## Understand problematic opioid use and how young people are being exposed to opioids.

Problematic opioid use is using opioids that are not prescribed to you or using prescribed opioids in a manner not intended or instructed by your doctor or pharmacist. It also includes using illegal opioids.

Click the link below to learn more about problematic opioid use.

[Problematic Opioid Use.pdf \(canada.ca\)](#)

## Be able to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose.

Opioids slow down the part of the brain that controls breathing. If you take more than your body can tolerate, you will begin to show signs and symptoms of an overdose. Taking too much of an opioid can lead to overdose and possible brain damage or death.

Click the links below to learn more about the signs and symptoms of an overdose and learn how you can protect yourself and others from an overdose, including how to respond if you are witnessing someone overdosing.

[Opioid Overdoses: What To Do \(fact sheet\) - Canada.ca](#)

[What is an Opioid Overdose? – Peterborough Drug Strategy Video](#)

## Get a naloxone kit and learn how to use it. Encourage your teen to do the same.

Naloxone is a safe, fast-acting medication used to temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone can restore breathing within 2 to 5 minutes. It is safe to keep on-hand because it cannot be improperly used and does not result in dependence. ***Naloxone is available free, no prescription required at pharmacies and the Grey Bruce Health Unit.***

Click the link below to learn more about Naloxone, a life-saving medication.

[Naloxone: Save a Life \(fact sheet\) - Canada.ca](#)

# WHAT CAN PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS DO?

## **Talk to your teen about substance use. Learn how to recognize signs of a problem and what to do.**

Parents and caregivers face unique challenges when talking to their teen about drugs. Remember to keep the lines of communication open with your teen.

Click the links below to learn ways to improve communication between you and your teen when talking about drugs.

[Prescription opioids, including fentanyl: What parents and caregivers need to know](#)

[How to Talk with Your Teens about Drugs: Communication Tips for Parents](#)

## **Consider sharing these resources with your teen and the following Tips for Lowering Overdose Risk:**

- Avoiding using alone. Have a friend who is not using stay with you.
- If using alone, call the National Overdose Response Service at 1-888-688-6677. Someone will stay on the line and call 911 if you do not respond.
- Get Naloxone and have it ready. Naloxone is available at pharmacies and the Health Unit.
- Use 1 drug at a time. Avoid mixing. Mixing drugs, including alcohol, increases overdose risk. If mixing, use less of each drug.
- Start with a small test dose and go slow. If you have had a break from using, use less.
- Learn how to recognize an overdose. When in doubt, give Naloxone.
- Plan a safe ride home.
- Call 911 and give Naloxone if you witness or experience an overdose. [The Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act](#) protects the caller and anyone on the scene from simple drug possession charges.

**If you have a prescription for opioids, keep your medication locked and/or monitor the amount. If medication is missing, someone may be taking it.**

**Return unused or expired medications to the pharmacy for safe disposal.**

### **Get Help When You Need It:**

**For mental health and addictions services and other community supports, call 211.**