

What Is Fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a strong medicine made from opioids (chemicals used to treat strong pain and ongoing pain). It's up to 100 times stronger than other opiates like morphine, heroin or oxycodone. Drug dealers often sell fentanyl as fake oxycodone. Buyers may think they are getting oxycodone but they are getting another opioid drug that has fentanyl and other substances in it. On the street, these drugs have nicknames like: green beans, green apple, shady eighties, fake oxy, greenies, etc.

Fentanyl overdose has caused about 272 deaths in Alberta in the year 2015, with 35 of those occurring in Central Alberta.

What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is the antidote for opiates. It reverses the effect of opiates when given in time.

In response to the increasing number of deaths due to fentanyl overdoses, Alberta Health Services has made naloxone kits available in the communities and hospitals through the Take Home Naloxone (THN) Program. The kits can also be obtained in the pharmacies without prescription.

Who Can Give Naloxone?

Any qualified personnel who has completed the recommended training can give naloxone. There is a 30-minute e-learning module available on this link: <http://cdm.absorbtraining.ca/#/login> that is required before one can administer naloxone.

How to Prevent an Opioid Overdose

Since fentanyl is 100 more toxic, even small amounts can result in overdose. Always educate a drug user on overdose prevention.

To reduce the risk of overdose, the following is advised:

- Don't use fentanyl or any other drug when you are by yourself.
- Start using in small amounts.
- Do "test shots" (or test doses).
- Don't mix drugs.
- Avoid speed balling.
- Always carry a naloxone kit.
- Know when to call 911.

What Someone Who Is Overdosing May Look Like

Overdose signs and symptoms include:

- Slow breathing or not breathing at all.
- Nails and/or lips are blue.
- Choking or throwing up.
- Making gurgling sounds.
- Skin is cold and clammy.
- Can't wake them up.

Fentanyl Information for Central Zone Schools

Responding to an overdose

- Stimulate – call 911
- Airway
- Ventilation (rescue breathing)
- Evaluate the situation
- Muscular injection of naloxone
- Evaluate again (continue rescue breathing)

How to Perform Rescue Breathing

- Place the person on their back.
- Call the person's name and tap their breast bone gently to check their response.
- Tilt the chin up to open the airway.
- Check to see if there is anything in the person's mouth blocking their airway.
- Use your **barrier mask** (if you have one).
- Plug the nose with one hand, and give 2 even, regular-sized breaths – this should make their chest rise.
- If you don't see their chest rise, tilt the head back more and make sure that you're plugging the nose and covering the mouth with the mask.
- Give one breath every 5 seconds, for 5 breaths, repeat 5 times

How to Give an Intramuscular (IM) Injection of Naloxone

- Remove necessary clothing to expose upper thigh.
- Divide thigh into 3 equal parts - **the middle third** is where the injection will go.
- Remove the cap from the vial and clean with a swab.
- Insert the needle and draw up naloxone – remove air space.
- Hold the syringe like a dart.
- Insert the needle at a right (90°) angle into the muscle.
- Push down the plunger slowly and steadily until empty.
- Remove needle at the same angle and dispose of safely.
- Keep vial(s) for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to see what you have given.

Evaluate Again

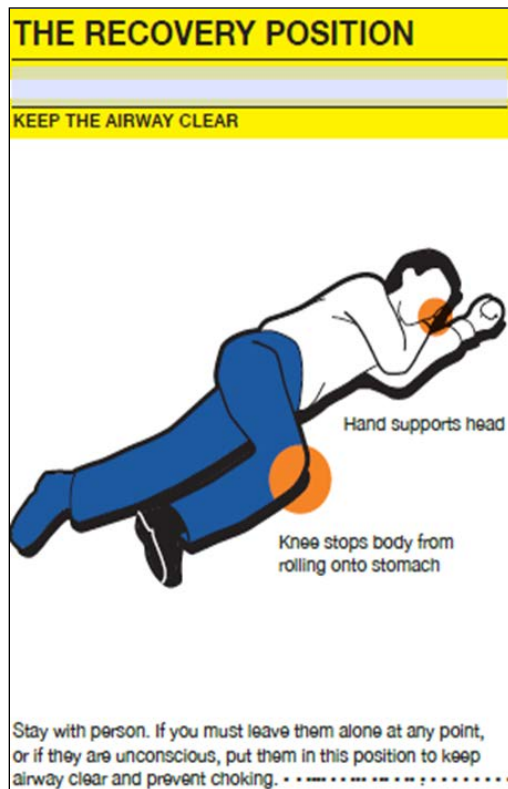
- Naloxone should take effect within 1-5 minutes.
- After giving the first dose, unless person is awake and breathing NORMALLY on their own, continue rescue breathing for another 2 min (5 breaths for 5 limbs).



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- If they still do not respond, give the 2nd dose.
- Continue rescue breathing until they are breathing on their own or until help arrives.
- When the naloxone kicks in, the person may be disoriented, agitated, and angry and want to use drugs again.
- Try to explain to them what happened, tell them EMS are on their way and urge them not to use.
- Stay with the person until EMS arrive.

The Recovery Position



If the person starts breathing on their own
OR if you need to leave the person
– PUT THEM IN RECOVERY POSITION –
this will help keep their airway open and
prevent them from vomiting and choking

WAIT FOR EMS TO ARRIVE

After The Event

- Return to the Harm Reduction (HR) program to replace Naloxone Kit if used/stolen/lost.
- Complete the Naloxone follow-up form found in the kit.
- Take the opportunity to “debrief” with staff.
- Training is valid for 1 year.

Other Helpful Resources:

1. Pharmacy Distribution of THN Kits:

- THN kits are now available through registered Central Zone Pharmacies: www.ahs.ca/assets/healthinfo/mh/hi-amh-thn-pharmacies.pdf. Note that this list may change so please check back regularly and update your records accordingly.

2. Community Distribution of THN Kits:

- Several Walk-In clinics, Community Health Centres and one Mental Health Centre have been added to enhance THN kit availability across the Central Zone. The entire list is available here: www.ahs.ca/assets/healthinfo/mh/hi-amh-thn-walk-in-clinics.pdf

3. Naloxone Information and Availability:

- General information on fentanyl including **where to access the THN Kits** located here : www.ahs.ca/info/page12491.aspx or at www.drugsfool.ca

4. Need Help with Drug Related Issues?

- If you are concerned about your own or someone else's use of illicit drugs, or misuse of any kind, or if you would simply like more information on drug use, call the Addiction and Mental Health Helpline(available 24hours a day, seven days a week) at **1-866-332-2322**

5. Information for Teachers and Parents:

- Information for teachers that include Addictions and Mental Health education in schools, lesson plans, prevention strategies and peer leadership and other mental health topics can be found on this link: www.ahs.ca/amh/Page2674.aspx
- Information for Parents that include how to deal with a child or spouse that is engaged in substance use or gambling can be found here: www.ahs.ca/amh/Page2716.aspx
- The Parent Information Series designed to answer frequently asked questions and give parents factual information that may help prevent their children from using drugs, help them make healthy lifestyle choices and support them in making changes in their lives can be found here: www.ahs.ca/amh/Page2434.aspx

6. Awareness Campaign:

- In order to help raise awareness, Alberta Health Services encourages every school to print posters and awareness materials for display in schools. These awareness posters can be downloaded from the following link: www.ahs.ca/info/page12491.aspx and www.ahs.ca/assets/healthinfo/padis/hi-padis-fentanyl-campaign2015-poster-85x11.pdf