

Naloxone Can Be Safely Given by First Responders During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Naloxone is a medication that can reverse an opioid overdose and save lives.

With proper precautions, **overdose reversal with naloxone is safe even during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

To manage risk of COVID-19 exposure, take proper training and extra precautions before you perform manual ventilation or CPR. If you see any illicit drugs in powder or liquid form, follow NIOSH [guidance for handling illicit drugs](#).

Steps to respond to a suspected opioid overdose while reducing risk of COVID-19 exposure:

1. Make certain that Emergency Medical Services have been requested.
2. Assess the scene and make certain it is safe to enter/approach.
3. Recognize the [signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose](#).
4. Follow standard precautions (e.g., wearing gloves) for all overdoses.
5. If the person is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 or if you see illicit drugs in powder or liquid form, put on appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) before you administer naloxone.*
6. Position the person facing away from you.
7. Administer naloxone using standard practices of care and following package insert directions.
8. Start other life support measures if needed, and if trained to do so, using [appropriate precautions](#) if the person is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
9. Stand up and step back to a distance of 6 feet as the person regains consciousness.
10. Make sure that the person receives professional medical follow-up before leaving the scene.
11. When safe, remove PPE following appropriate safety [procedures](#). Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
12. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and you had no skin contact with illicit drugs, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

How Naloxone is Given



Sprayed in the nose

Injected in a muscle or a vein

		*Recommended PPE for:		
		Suspected/confirmed COVID-19	Visible illicit drugs in powder or liquid form	Suspected COVID-19 and visible illicit drugs
Use gloves for all overdose responses		A single pair of disposable examination gloves	Nitrile gloves (double gloves or use thicker gloves if on-scene health risk assessment warrants higher protection)	Use level of PPE recommended in the column specific to when illicit drugs are visible
		Disposable isolation gown or single-use/disposable coveralls	Wrist/arm protection (e.g., on-duty uniform with sleeves, sleeve covers, gowns, or coveralls)	
		Any fit tested NIOSH-approved respirator (N95 or higher) or facemask if respirators are not available	Fit tested disposable N100, R100, or P100 respirator	
		Eye protection (i.e., safety goggles or disposable face shield)	Eye protection (i.e., safety goggles or glasses)	



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