Opioid Overdose Prevention for Law Enforcement and First Responders

Sponsored by the NC Office of EMS
Overview

- The goal of this presentation is to help inform the public safety community of North Carolina on how to recognize and treat suspected opioid overdoses.
Learning Objectives

• Background on naloxone programs in public safety
• Understand the Good Samaritan Law
• Identify characteristics of an opioid overdose
• Learn how to assist in treatment of suspected opioid overdose
Background

- Prescription opioid pain medications account for the majority of overdose deaths.
- Most of these deaths were unintentional. Only 17% of these deaths were suicide attempts (2010).
- NC has a higher mortality rate for overdose than the US national average.
What is Naloxone?

• Naloxone is a non-addictive prescription medication that helps to block the effects of opiates on the body
• It has been used by EMS routinely for over 40 years
• There are no effects if an opiate has not been used
• Works quickly (1-3 minutes)
Why Do LEO’s and Responders Carry Naloxone?

- LEO’s and FD’s are typically the first to arrive on scene
- Often a feeling of helplessness while waiting for EMS arrival
- Help improve interactions with the public
- Assist in preventing opioid overdose deaths
- Decrease incidents of PTSD among public safety
SB20 911 Good Samaritan/Naloxone Access Law

- The purpose of the law is to prevent the fear of prosecution from preventing someone calling 911 for the victim
- Witnesses to overdoses cannot be prosecuted for possession of small amounts of drugs, paraphernalia, or underage drinking
- Civil liabilities for doctors who prescribe Naloxone have been removed so that families, friends, and public safety can carry and administer this antidote
- Liability for those who administer Naloxone has also been removed
- Effective April 9, 2013
Common Opiates

- Heroin
- Codeine
- Demerol
- Morphine
- Darvocet
- Fentanyl
- Dilaudid
- Methadone
- Opium
- Hydrocodone
- Oxycodone
- Vicodin
- OxyContin
- Tylenol 3
- Tylox
- Levorphanol
- Percocet
- Percodan
Signs of Overdose

• Blue or pale skin
• Limp body
• Slow/Absent pulse
• Vomiting
• Very slow, irregular, or absent breathing
• Choking, gurgling, or snoring sounds
• Loss of consciousness
What Happens in an Overdose?

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.
How Naloxone Works

Narcan reversing an overdose

Narcan has a stronger affinity to the opioid receptors than opioids like heroin or Percocet, so it knocks the opioids off the receptors for a short time. This allows the person to breathe again and reverses the overdose.
When to use Naloxone

SUSPECTED OVERDOSE

UNRESPONSIVE TO STERNAL RUB

BREATHING STATUS

NORMAL OR FAST
- MONITOR PATIENT

SLOW (<10/MIN)
- NALOXONE

NONE/GASPING
- NALOXONE/RESCUE BREATHING/CPR
Naloxone Assembly
Naloxone Assembly

1. Pull or pry off yellow caps
2. Pry off red cap
3. Grip clear plastic wings
4. Screw capsule of naloxone into base of syringe
How to use Naloxone

- Assemble kit
- Wipe the nose clear if necessary
- Keep the head tilted backwards slightly with one hand
- Insert atomizer into one nostril
- Gently, but firmly, spray half (1mL) into the nostril
- Spray the remainder into the other nostril
Naloxone Administration
Special Considerations

• Always keep scene safety as your top priority

• Make sure EMS has been activated and keep them updated

• If the patient does not have a pulse, immediately begin CPR along with administration of Naloxone

• If the patient is gasping or is not breathing, initiate CPR/rescue breathing as necessary in addition to Naloxone administration

• Naloxone is quick acting (1-3 minutes) and typically lasts 30-90 minutes
Special Considerations

• A repeat dose may be necessary in some cases

• As the patient begins to awaken, they are often nauseated, vomiting, and combative, due to rapid withdrawal

• If they do begin to vomit, help roll them to their side and monitor their airway

• There is no effect on the patient if Naloxone is given and they have not used opiates
Examples of Naloxone Kits
Questions?
Special Thanks to our Partners
Sources

- https://www.communitycarenc.org/
- http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/HTML/S20v7.html
- http://www.nchrc.org/
- http://www.projectlazarus.org/