

What Are Opioids?

Opioids are **POWERFUL, HIGHLY ADDICTIVE NARCOTICS** that mimic chemicals in the brain and body. Commonly prescribed to treat pain, opioids trick the brain into feeling pleasure. But while opioids can make a real, positive difference for people living with chronic pain, they should always be taken with extreme caution.

Opioid Alternatives

Ask your doctor or dentist about opioid alternatives. Over-the-counter medications are safer and can be as effective in treating pain. Physical therapy, massage, acupuncture, and chiropractic care are also options.

Know the Signs of an Opioid Overdose

- Unconscious or can't be awakened
- Person who can't be awakened is making gurgling or rattling breathing noises
- Fingernails or lips are blue/purple/grayish/ashen
- Small "pinpoint" pupils
- Breathing or heartbeat is very slow or stopped
- Face is extremely pale and/or clammy to the touch

Call 911 immediately if anyone shows these symptoms and administer naloxone if you have it—even if you are unsure.

Get More Information

Want to know more about opioids, naloxone, or where to find help in South Carolina? Then visit JustPlainKillers.com.

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Reversing an Opioid Overdose

Save a life in one, two, breathe.



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How to reverse an opioid overdose with naloxone:

1

Call 911
on speaker
phone

2

If observing less than 8 breaths per
minute, tilt the head back and begin
rescue breathing

3

Place nozzle in
a nostril and
press plunger

Remember, breathing is more important than waking up.

Why keep naloxone on hand?

- You may live with an older loved one who is taking a prescription opioid and is at risk of mistakenly overdosing.
- If a child gets into prescription opioids, even a small amount can be dangerous—naloxone is safe to use on children and can be lifesaving.
- A home health worker is responsible for caring for someone older who is taking a prescription opioid.
- You know someone who struggles with substance use.
- You have a friend who uses drugs occasionally or recreationally.
- Whether you live in an urban or rural area, it can still take time for first responders to arrive.

Other reasons include:

- It's effective and works fast.
- It presents no harm when given to someone not experiencing an opioid overdose.
- Without it, an overdose can cause death or permanent brain damage.
- Carrying naloxone reduces stigma and shows you care.
- It's available in South Carolina without a prescription.

Everyone has their own reason for carrying naloxone. But one thing's true for all—it can reverse an opioid overdose and save a life.

Tips for Using Naloxone



Spray the entire contents into one nostril. Do not “prime the pump” before use.

If consciousness is not regained in 2-3 minutes, administer a second dose in the other nostril.

Naloxone's effects only last 30-90 minutes, so it's vital that the individual who has overdosed receives medical attention.

Naloxone is not effective in reversing overdoses caused by stimulants only, but it's safe to use even if a suspected opioid overdose turns out to be a different medical emergency.

**Find naloxone near you:
[JustPlainKillers.com/naloxone](https://www.justplainkillers.com/naloxone)**