

International Overdose Awareness Day – Aug. 31

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Security and Emergency Management Services have a table set up today, August 31st, 2023, located by The Service Hub (room D2300). Come by and pick up a free Narcan Kit as well as some Seneca branded swag!

All drug overdoses are preventable. Practical strategies to reverse and prevent overdoses and reduce the harms associated with problematic drug use are available. One of the aims of International Overdose Awareness Day is to increase awareness of evidence-based strategies and tools that can help prevent overdoses from occurring – that is, preventing harms and deaths from overdose.

One way that individuals and communities can equip themselves to prevent overdoses from occurring is by having the knowledge to respond to an overdose.

Overdoses can look different depending on the type of drug or combination of drugs that have been used. If you think someone is experiencing an overdose, remember that this is a medical emergency. Call for emergency assistance and then administer first aid if you can.

There are many evidence-based strategies and initiatives in place around the world to reduce overdose. Some examples of these are;

- Naloxone or Narcan® distribution programs,
- Safe consumption sites or safe injecting sites, which are known by many other names including ‘supervised consumption’, ‘supervised injecting’, ‘drug consumption’, or ‘medically supervised injecting’ sites, rooms or facilities,
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) which is also known as opioid substitution treatment or therapy (OST) or pharmacotherapy,
- Needle and syringe programs, also known by needle and syringe exchange programs, many of which offer additional wrap-around social and health support services,
- Drug checking or drug testing services which analyze drugs to uncover any potentially dangerous substances.

Some of the main risk factors of drug overdose are:

- Using more than one drug at a time or sequentially,
- Redosing too soon,
- Adulterated or contaminated drug supply,
- Dependence or addiction to a substance or drug,
- Changes in tolerance (e.g., using drugs again after a period of abstinence or even after a break as short as two or three days),
- A lowered immune system or chronic health conditions such as obesity or heart disease,
- Using a higher dose of a drug than usual or redosing soon after using the first time,
- Using alone or in an unfamiliar place,
- A history of overdose.

Naloxone, which is also known as Narcan®, is a medication known as an opioid antagonist. Naloxone works to reverse the effects of opioid overdose temporarily, allowing the person experiencing overdose to breathe again while help is on its way.

Naloxone can be safely administered to a person experiencing an overdose, even if you're unsure whether they are experiencing opioid overdose. There are very few risks associated with naloxone use. A very small number of people have hypersensitivity to naloxone which can be managed after the person has been revived. Naloxone can't be misused to get high.

It is important to remember that naloxone offers a temporary reversal and that emergency services must be engaged as soon as possible to support the person who is experiencing this medical emergency.

To find out more information, please visit the official International Overdose Awareness Day [webpage](#).

Seneca offers personal counselling services, find out more [here](#).

tags : awareness, emergency, management, overdose, services