An abstract graphic on the left side of the page, consisting of overlapping, semi-transparent blue triangles and polygons of various shades, creating a complex, crystalline or mosaic-like pattern.

# Hot Topics in Opioid Education and Naloxone Barriers

---

BY MICHAEL DEJOS & MATTHEW COLLINS

# Overview

---

1

Identify opioid-related overdoses present in patients

2

Review education on how to properly administer Naloxone as well as a general overview of the medication

3

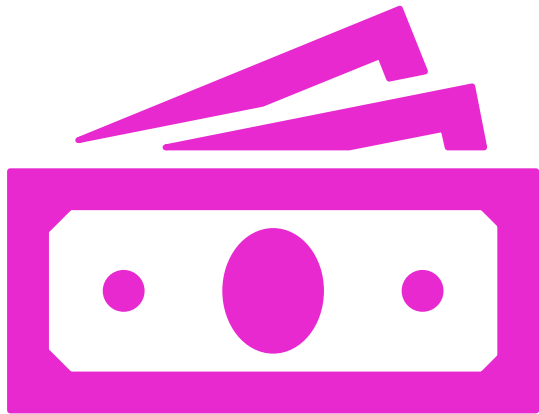
Recognize potential barriers a patient may have when being prescribed Naloxone

4

List solutions to potential barriers a patient may encounter when prescribed Naloxone

5

Explain alternative pain agents in place of an opioid medication



# Disclosure

---

NO FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES TO REPORT

# Background

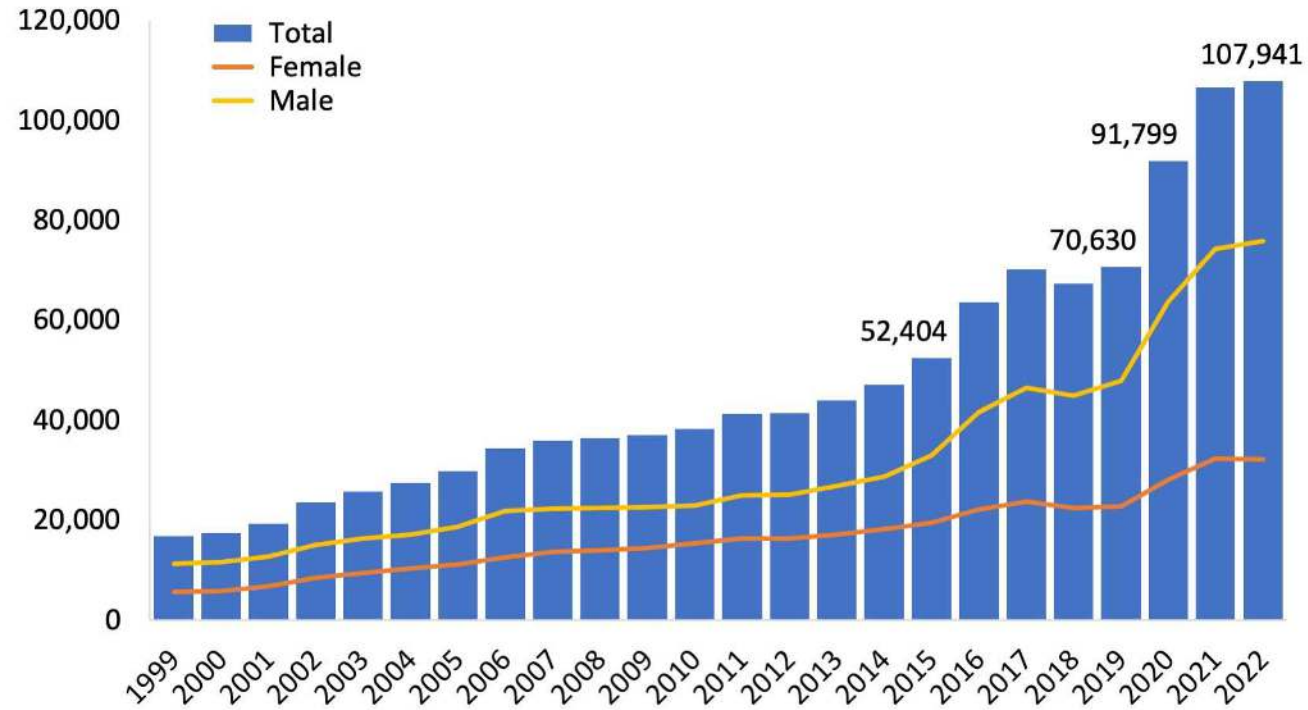
Approximately 125 million opioid prescriptions were dispensed in the United States in 2023

From 1999-2022, approximately 294,000 people have died from overdoses involving opioid prescriptions alone

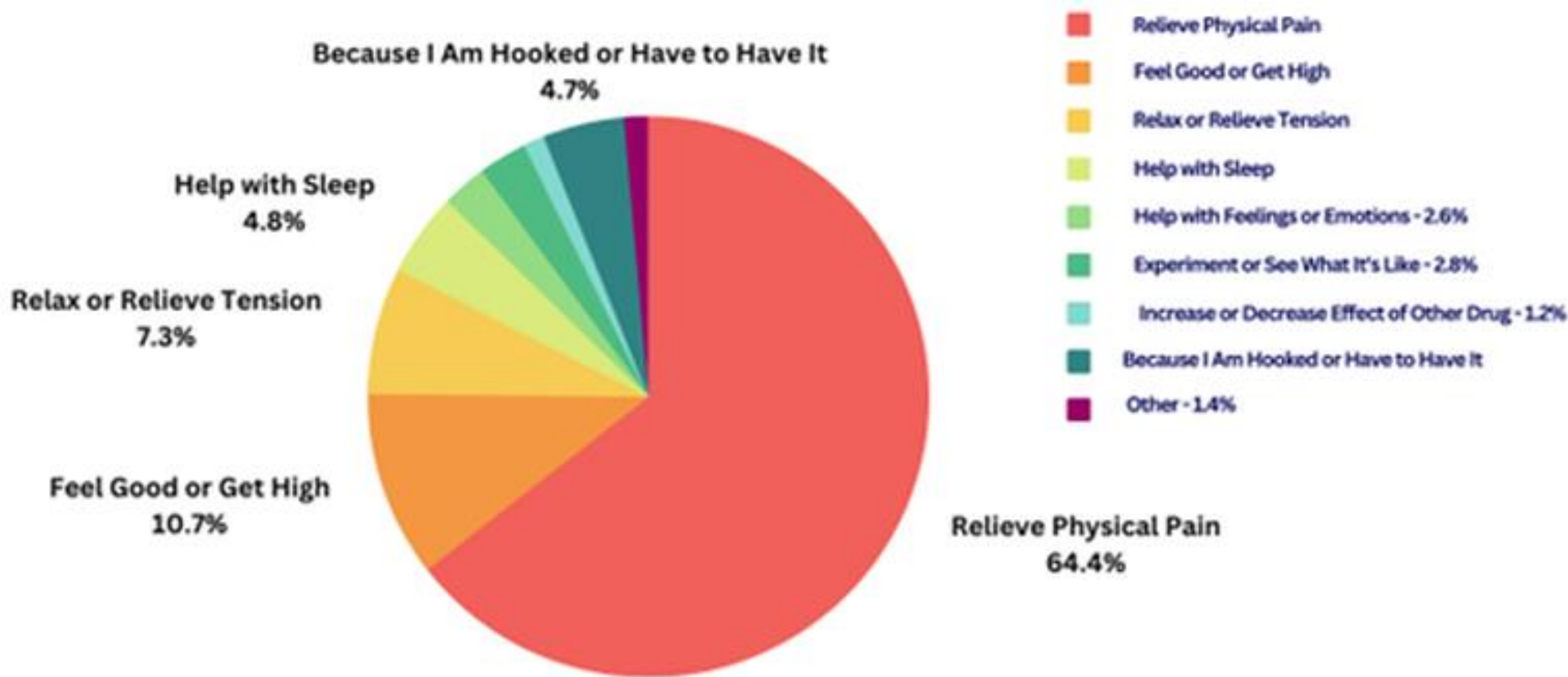
- Does not include illicit use

Of the opioid-related deaths, 43% of the deaths reported in 2022 could have been prevented

### Figure 1. U.S. Overdose Deaths\* by Sex, 1999-2022



\*Includes deaths with underlying causes of unintentional drug poisoning (X40–X44), suicide drug poisoning (X60–X64), homicide drug poisoning (X85), or drug poisoning of undetermined intent (Y10–Y14), as coded in the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2022 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 4/2024.



# Common Misuses for Opioids

# Common Opioids Prescribed

Hydrocodone

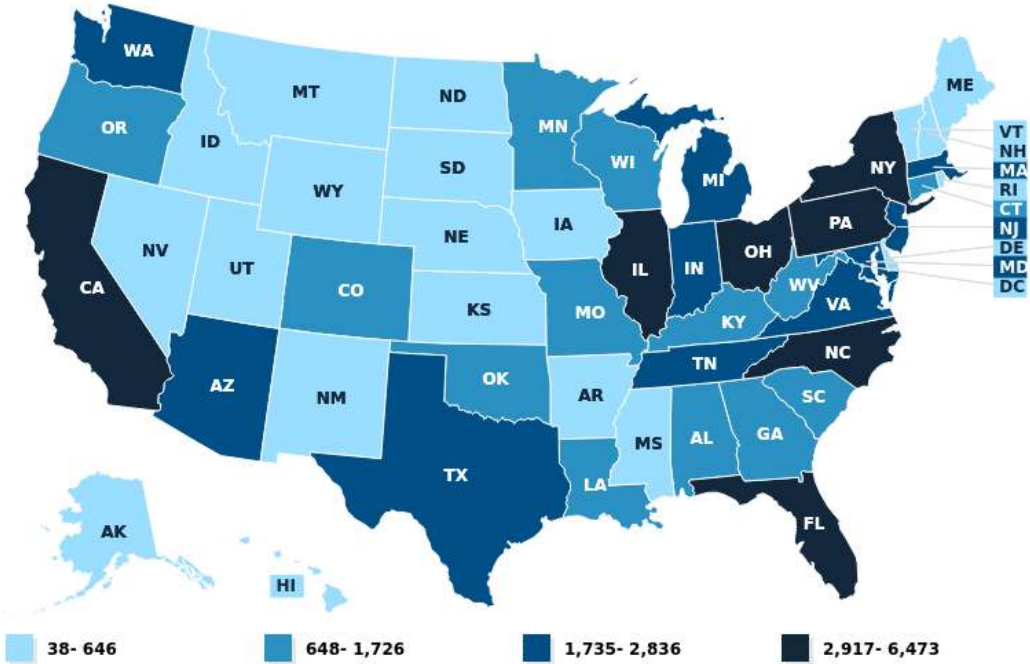
Oxycodone

Morphine

Fentanyl

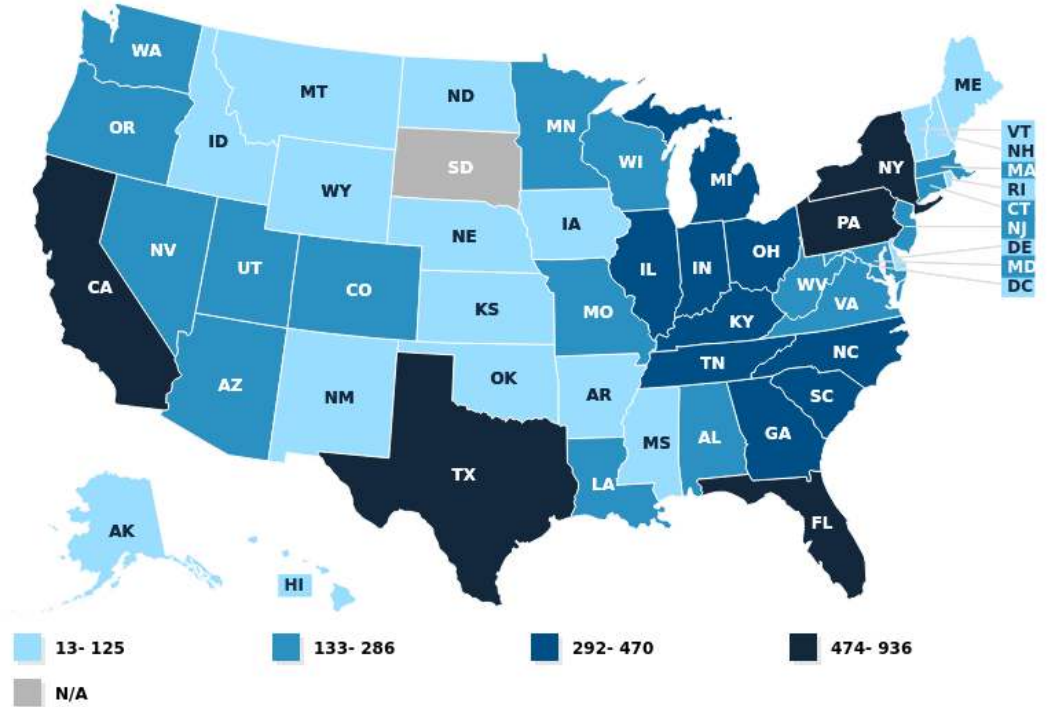
Codeine

Opioid Overdose Deaths by Type of Opioid: Synthetic Opioids, other than Methadone (e.g. fentanyl, tramadol), 2



SOURCE: KFF's State Health Facts.

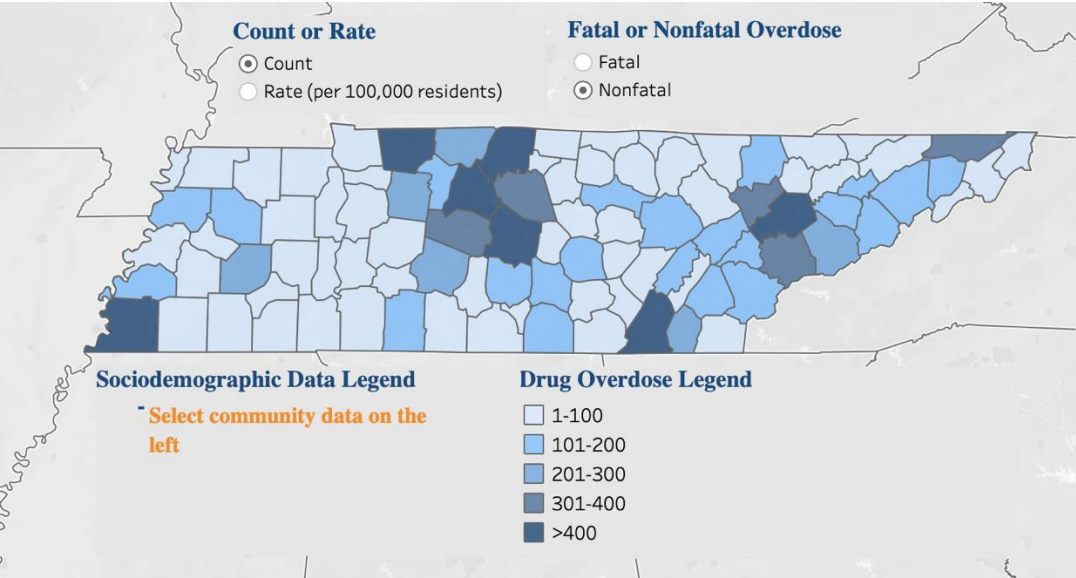
Opioid Overdose Deaths by Type of Opioid: Natural and Semisynthetic Opioids (e.g. oxycodone, hydrocodone), 2



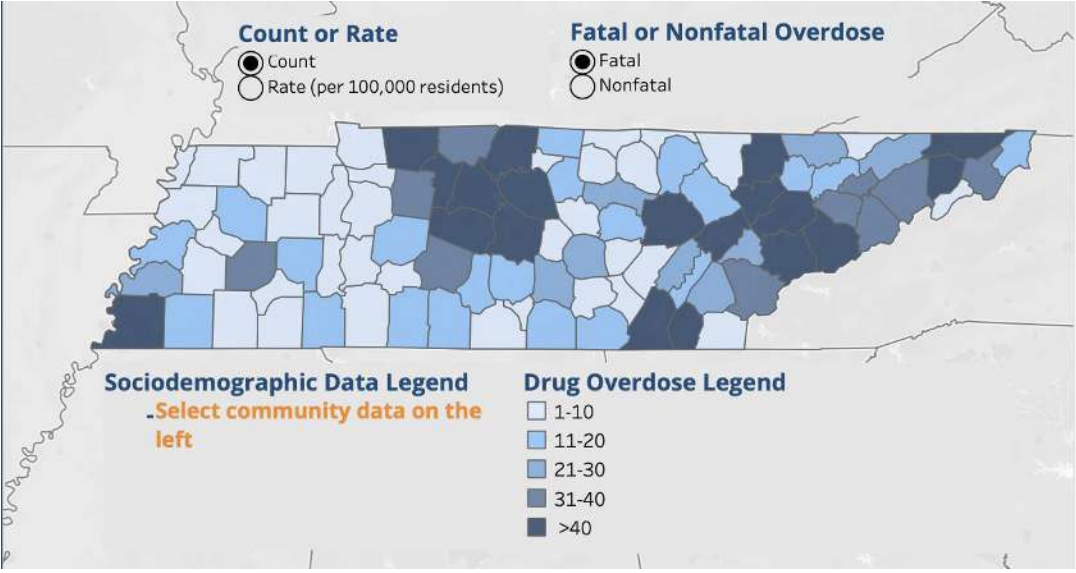
SOURCE: KFF's State Health Facts.



# Nonfatal Overdoses in TN 2022



# Fatal Overdoses in TN 2022



# Signs of an Opioid Overdose

---

Blue or purple  
fingernails and  
lips

Unresponsive  
to voice or  
touch

“Pinpoint”  
sized pupils

Slow  
heartbeat or  
blood pressure

Slow, irregular,  
or stopped  
breathing

Pale, clammy  
skin

# Responding to an Opioid Overdose

## 5 STEPS TO RESPOND TO AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

STEP

1



**SHOUT & SHAKE**  
their name & their shoulders

STEP

2



**CALL EMERGENCY DISPATCH**  
613-575-2000

STEP

3



**GIVE NALOXONE:**  
1 spray into nostril or inject vial/ampule into arm or leg.

STEP

4



**PERFORM RESCUE BREATHING AND/OR CHEST COMPRESSIONS**

STEP

5



**IS IT WORKING?**  
If **no** improvement after 2-3 minutes, repeat step 3 & 4. **Stay with them.**

### RECOVERY POSITION

If the person begins breathing on their own, or if you have to leave them alone, put them in the recovery position.

Head should be tilted back slightly to open airway



Hand supports head

Knee stops body from rolling onto stomach

### SIGNS OF OPIOID OVERDOSE

- Person can't be woken up
- Breathing is slow or has stopped
- Snoring or gurgling sounds
- Fingernails and lips turn blue or purple
- Pupils are tiny or eyes are rolled back
- Body is limp



# Naloxone (Narcan)

---

Opioid antagonist  
used to reverse  
opioid affects

Available IV, IM,  
SubQ, and Nasal

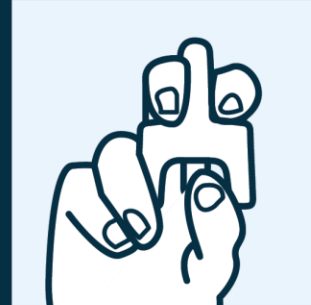
Immediate effect

PREVENTING OPIOID OVERDOSES

## How to Administer Narcan



Remove Narcan from box



Hold with your thumb,  
first and middle finger



Insert tip into  
either nostril



Press the plunger firmly

If you suspect an overdose is occurring, **call 911**. Administer rescue breathing and naloxone (Narcan).

# Proper Administration Technique

---

# Barriers of Naloxone within Communities

---



AFFORDABILITY



LACK OF  
EDUCATION



SOCIAL STIGMA



“UNNECESSARY”  
MEDICATION

# Affordability

---



## **Over-the-Counter Price**

Ranges from \$40-80 per box



## **Prescription**

Ranges from \$5-40 per box

# Lack of Education

---

Unfamiliar  
medication

No counseling on  
medication when  
discharged from  
hospital

Unaware of  
medication uses  
and/or opioid  
overdosing



# Social Stigma

---

“It won’t happen to me.”

“I am not a drug addict.”

“I won’t be on the opioid for long, for I don’t need it.”

“Why would I buy something I won’t use?”

“No thanks, I heard bad things about this medication.”

# “Unnecessary” Medication

---

Medication only used  
for emergencies



Opioid effects last  
longer than Naloxone,  
so may require  
multiple dosing



Naloxone stays in  
system for up to 30  
minutes

# Potential Solutions

---

## Affordability

- Several organizations offer free Naloxone and additional education

## Lack of Education

- Concise pamphlets containing proper education of uses and administration

## Social Stigma

- Promote awareness of opioid overdose and the importance of Naloxone medication

## Unnecessary Medication

- Educate patients to recognize an opioid overdose in themselves as well as others

## Putting it All Together

---

Opioids are utilized for pain management; however, it is important to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of a potential opioid overdose

---

Naloxone is a safe and effective medication used to reverse opioid overdose effects

---

There are barriers patients experience when purchasing Naloxone alongside an opioid prescription

# Pain Management with Opioids

---



PHYSICIANS PRESCRIBE OPIOIDS FOR SEVERE, ACUTE OR CHRONIC PAIN (PAIN SCALE 8-10)



ONLY ORAL MEDICATION THAT OFFERS IMMEDIATE AND EFFECTIVE RELIEF OF SEVERE PAIN



OFTEN USED IN A MULTIMODAL PAIN REGIMEN

# Alternative Recommendations

---

Acetaminophen

NSAIDs

Anticonvulsants

Antidepressants

Musculoskeletal  
Agents

Anxiolytics

# Key Takeaways

Regardless of alternative regimens, opioids may still be needed in managing a patient's pain episodes

It is important to utilize a multi-modal pain regimen, so opioids are not relied upon

If an opioid is introduced into a patient's pain regimen, counsel patient on possible side effects as well as overdose symptoms

Counsel patients on Naloxone and how to utilize the medication in an instance of an overdose

# Review Question #1

Which of the following is **not** considered a sign of an opioid overdose?

- A. Unresponsive to voice or touch
- B. Warm, burning skin
- C. Slow heartbeat
- D. “Pinpoint” pupils



# Review Question #1

Which of the following is **not** considered a sign of an opioid overdose?

- A. Unresponsive to voice or touch
- B. Warm, burning skin
- C. Slow heartbeat
- D. “Pinpoint” pupils

# Review Question #2

Which of the following is **true** about Naloxone (Narcan)?

- A. This medication can only be given intravenously.
- B. Its medication class is an opioid agonist.
- C. It cannot be administered in an outpatient setting.
- D. Its onset of action is quick/immediate.

# Review Question #2

Which of the following is **true** about Naloxone (Narcan)?

- A. This medication can only be given intravenously.
- B. Its medication class is an opioid agonist.
- C. It cannot be administered in an outpatient setting.
- D. Its onset of action is quick/immediate.

# Review Question #3

Which of the following barriers is seen with Naloxone within communities? (Select all that apply)

- A. Lack of Education
- B. Social Stigma
- C. “Unnecessary” Medication
- D. Affordability

# Review Question #3

Which of the following barriers is seen with Naloxone within communities? (Select all that apply)

- A. Lack of Education
- B. Social Stigma
- C. “Unnecessary” Medication
- D. Affordability

# Review Question #4

Which of the following is the best solution for a patient struggling to afford their Naloxone medication?

- A. Give the patient an educational handout
- B. Advise the patient to not pick up the medication
- C. Offer the patient resources or organizations that can provide Naloxone for free
- D. Tell them they must pay for it to receive their opioid medication

# Review Question #4

Which of the following is the best solution for a patient struggling to afford their Naloxone medication?

- A. Give the patient an educational handout
- B. Advise the patient to not pick up the medication
- C. Offer the patient resources or organizations that can provide Naloxone for free
- D. Tell them they must pay for it to receive their opioid medication

# Review Question #5

A patient comes to you asking for advice about pain they have been experiencing. They are reluctant to take opioids and were wondering what else they could take for their pain. What are some medications you can recommend to the patient? (Select all that apply)

- A. NSAIDs
- B. Anti-hypertensive agents
- C. Acetaminophen
- D. Statin agents



# Review Question #5

A patient comes to you asking for advice about pain they have been experiencing. They are reluctant to take opioids and were wondering what else they could take for their pain. What are some medications you can recommend to the patient? (Select all that apply)

- A. NSAIDs
- B. Anti-hypertensive agents
- C. Acetaminophen
- D. Statin agents