

Naloxone



It takes 5 minutes to empower your patients with a safety plan You might save their life

For more information, search 'naloxone' at my.psa.org.au OR nps.org.au

Why should I talk about naloxone?

- In Australia, prescribed opioids contribute to 75 hospitalisations and 2 deaths per day.
- Research shows that **most** patients prescribed opioids for pain would appreciate or expect to receive information about opioid safety and naloxone
- If approached sensitively, it can be a great tool for building trust and rapport

Which patients should I talk to about naloxone?

Anybody who takes strong prescription opioids will benefit from keeping naloxone in the home **in case of emergency**.

All patients prescribed opioids should know that naloxone is available.

Patients are *most* at risk if they:

- **Also take other psychoactive medicines** (e.g. benzodiazepines, gabapentinoids, other psychiatric medicine)
- **Have comorbidities that would increase their risk** (e.g. respiratory conditions like COPD, renal or liver impairment)

Key counselling points

Refer to the patient leaflet for more information



PREPARE

- Make a safety plan and discuss with family, friends, or a carer



PREVENT

- Know how to reduce your risk



RESPOND

- Keep naloxone in the home
- Recognise the signs and symptoms
- In an emergency: administer naloxone and call an ambulance



Naloxone is available with a script, OTC, or free from participating pharmacies

Naloxone is an easy add-on when discussing opioid safety

1. Start the conversation

"Can I talk to you about a medicine called naloxone?"

"It is available over the counter and we recommend that anyone taking strong opioids keeps it in the home."

2. Discuss opioid risks



Language is important!

The term 'overdose' is often misunderstood.

- Say 'severe reaction' (avoid 'overdose')
OR
- Define 'overdose' before you label it

"The most severe reactions to opioids are loss of consciousness and difficulty breathing, which (in a worst case scenario) can cause death."

"This is sometimes called an 'overdose', but it can happen even if you take your normal prescribed dose"

3. Offer naloxone as part of a safety plan



Normalise naloxone:

Liken it to a fire extinguisher, first aid kit, or EpiPen

"Keeping naloxone is like having a fire extinguisher: we hope you'll never need it, but it's important to have in your home just in case"



Reassure that this is just a precaution

This advice applies to everyone

"Sometimes severe reactions happen even when you're doing everything right."

"That's why we encourage everyone to take this home 'just in case'."

"Having an opioid safety plan can protect you and your family"