



## **Would you like to be dispensed naloxone?**

**You have a right to be dispensed naloxone at the same time that you purchase hypodermic needles or syringes.**

### **How does naloxone work?**

Naloxone is an opioid receptor antagonist meaning it binds to opioid receptors and reverses or blocks the effects of other opioids. Giving naloxone rapidly reverses the effects of opioid drugs, restoring normal respiration. It can be administered by injection or through a nasal spray.

### **Is naloxone safe?**

Yes. There is no evidence of significant adverse reactions to naloxone. Administering naloxone in cases of opioid overdose can cause withdrawal symptoms when the person is dependent on opioids; this is uncomfortable without being life threatening. The risk that someone overdosing on opioids will have a serious adverse reaction to naloxone is far less than their risk of dying from overdose. Naloxone works if a person has opioids in their system and has no harmful effect if opioids are absent. Naloxone should be given to any person who shows signs of an opioid overdose or when an overdose is suspected.

### **If naloxone is administered, what are the next steps that should be taken?**

It is important to call emergency responders right away. Naloxone is only active in the body for 30 to 90 minutes and its effects could wear off before those of the opioids, causing the user to stop breathing again. People who are given naloxone should be observed constantly until emergency care arrives. Overdoses involving highly potent synthetic opioids (e.g., fentanyl) or large quantities of opioids may require multiple doses of naloxone. If respiratory function does not improve, naloxone doses may be repeated every two to three minutes.