Naloxone: Tips for Prescribers and Pharmacists

Recommendations

FDA:

- · Discuss the availability of naloxone with all patients who are prescribed opioid analgesics.
- Consider prescribing naloxone to patients at increased risk of opioid overdose.
- Consider prescribing naloxone to patients with household members or close contacts at risk for accidental ingestion or opioid overdose.

CDC: Prescribe or dispense naloxone to the following high-risk populations:

- Total daily opioid dose ≥ 50 MME
- Concomitant opioid and benzodiazepine prescriptions
- · History of opioid overdose
- · History of substance use disorder
- Decreased tolerance (e.g., gap in opioid therapy, taper, incarceration)
- Other high-risk patient factors:
 - ≥65 years old
 - Sleep-disordered breathing (e.g., sleep apnea, CHF, obesity)
 - Mental health conditions (e.g., depression, anxiety, PTSD)
 - Renal or hepatic insufficiency

Naloxone is safe to prescribe or dispense to any person willing to learn to use it and save a life.

Key Points of Patient Education

How to identify an overdose:

- · Shallow or no breathing
- · Unable to wake or unresponsive to sternal rub
- · Pale, clammy skin
- Blue/gray lips or nails

How to respond to an overdose

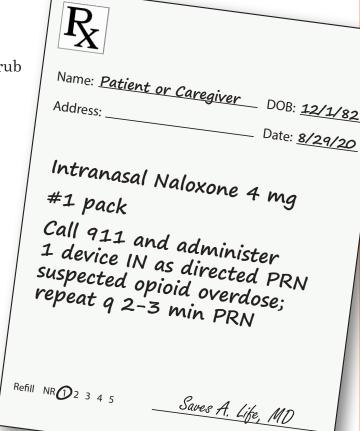
- Stay calm and call 911
- Give first naloxone dose
- Provide rescue breaths if possible
- Give second naloxone dose if no response in 2 to 3 minutes
- Monitor for recurrence of overdose after naloxone wears off

How to administer naloxone

Do not prime or test dosing device

Potential for opioid withdrawal after naloxone administration

Importance of educating family and caregivers about overdose and naloxone



Naloxone Products for Bystander Use

Multiple naloxone products are approved for the emergency treatment of known or suspected opoid overdose as manifested by respiratory and/or central nervous system depression. The following products are designed for use by trained bystanders:

Narcan Nasal Spray:

- Naloxone 4 mg
- Single-use nasal spray
- Available as pack of 2 sprays
- · NDC:
 - Brand (Emergent) 69547-0353-02
 - Generic (Sandoz) 00781-7176-12
 - Generic (Teva) 00093-2165-68

Kloxxado:

- Naloxone 8 mg
- Single-use nasal spray
- Available as pack of 2 sprays
- · NDC:
 - Brand (Hikma) 59467-0679-01

Zimhi:

- · Naloxone 5 mg
- Single-use intramuscular autoinjector
- Available as pack of 1 or 2 autoinjectors
- · NDC:
 - Brand (Adamis), 1 pack 38739-0600-01
 - Brand (Adamis), 2 pack 38739-0600-02

Pharmacist-Initiated Dispensing of Naloxone

With certification and a physician-approved protocol, pharmacists in Kentucky can initiate the dispensing of naloxone without a patient-specific prescription. (See **201 KAR 2:360** for details.)

Talking About Naloxone

Focus on adverse effects: "A serious side effect of opioids is that they could slow down or stop your breathing. Naloxone can help your [spouse] save your life if you have a bad reaction."

Talk about the individual: "Emergencies can occur unexpectedly, especially [at this dose, because you've had a gap in therapy, with your other medications or health conditions, etc.]."

Emphasize safety: "While accidental overdose may be unlikely, a serious accident might occur if you unintentionally take too much or if a child or other person gets access to your medication."

Use analogies: "Naloxone is like a fire extinguisher. You take precautions and hope you won't ever need to use it, but you keep it on hand just in case something bad happens."

Make it routine: "We recommend naloxone to all of our patients taking opioids."

Gauge interest: "Has anyone discussed naloxone with you? Would you like to learn how it improves safety?"

Other tips

- Approach the conversation as a routine medication consultation and discuss overdose as you would any serious but rare adverse drug reaction.
- Be professional and neutral, and avoid stigmatizing language (e.g., addict, abuser, OD, drug habit).
- If the patient is offended or defensive, express concern for their health and safety and return to the conversation at another time.
- Script out language you feel comfortable using and practice counseling with a friend or coworker.