

# RxSafe Marin

## Narcan Administration FAQs



### 1. What is naloxone?

Naloxone is a life-saving medication that reverses an opioid overdose while having little to no effect on an individual if opioids are not present in their system. Naloxone works by blocking the opioid receptor sites, reversing the toxic effects of the overdose. Naloxone is a prescription medication but in California it is also available without a physician's prescription through pharmacies, local public health department programs and other community agencies. The medication can be given by intranasal [nose] spray, intramuscular (into the muscle), subcutaneous (under the skin), or by intravenous injection. [Source: DHCS FAQ]

### 2. How can someone obtaining Narcan from a vending machine learn how to use it? There are instructions on the box of Narcan. Each box also includes a link and QR code for how to access a training video (English and Spanish) and additional local resources. RxSafe Marin and partners can also provide staff and community trainings. Additional information can be accessed at [RxSafeMarin.org/Naloxone](https://RxSafeMarin.org/Naloxone).

### 3. What if I administer Narcan to someone that I suspect is having an overdose? What are my liabilities?

In general, if you have the appropriate training, act in good faith and with general care, and do not receive compensation for administering Narcan, then you should not be held liable for administering Narcan. (Ca. Civil Code § 1714.22.) You should receive appropriate training before administering Narcan.

### 4. Can I separate the kits that come in the spray?

Please don't. You never know when you may need to give both doses, so it is important to keep the two nasal sprays together in the box.

### 5. Does Narcan expire?

Please check the expiration date on your kit (usually 3 years) and contact your provider for a replacement if your Narcan expires (do not throw out expired Narcan since it still works for up to 30 years!). Also, make sure you store your kit in a cool, shady place. It shouldn't be subjected to heat over 104 degrees Fahrenheit so keep it in a cooler/insulated bag if carrying it in your car.

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**6. How will someone react once they are given Narcan?**

The overdosing individual will wake up from a state similar to deep-sleep, so you can expect to be groggy, surprised and even upset at just what happened to them. Speak simply, reassure them that paramedics are arriving soon, and let them know you've given them Narcan because they overdosed. Stay calm and keep bystanders at a distance.

**7. How long will Narcan effects last?**

Narcan lasts 30-90 minutes. By then, paramedics should have taken over but if not, administer Narcan again.

**8. Where can I obtain Narcan?**

Narcan is available without a prescription at many pharmacies (call yours first) and often covered by insurance. Community-based organizations like The Spahr Center in Corte Madera distribute **free** Narcan during drop-in hours. There are also vending machines in Marin County where you can access free Narcan 24/7, as well. Visit [rxsafemarin.org/naloxone](http://rxsafemarin.org/naloxone) for a list of locations.

**9. Can a person get high from Narcan spray?**

Narcan carries no risk of getting someone high.

**10. How much does Narcan cost if you don't have insurance?**

Without insurance it's about \$130-\$150 at a pharmacy.. Again, visit [rxsafemarin.org/naloxone](http://rxsafemarin.org/naloxone) if you want to find free Narcan.

**11. What if a person is not overdosing and I give them Narcan?**

Narcan only works on opioid overdoses. It will have no effect if the health complication is not due to an opioid (e.g., heart attack, stroke, seizure, or overdose caused by barbiturates or methamphetamines ). Call 911 immediately for any serious medical crises, including overdoses.

**12. How can I do rescue breathing during COVID-19?**

There are CPR masks available to use as a preventative measure if you are concerned about COVID-19 or do not feel comfortable with mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing for any reason. Chest compressions are also an effective way to restore or maintain the victim's breathing. You may contact the American Red Cross or your local fire station to learn CPR or renew your certification.

**13. Do you have a refresher I can take if I forget how to rescue someone with Narcan?**

Yes, please view this 12-minute training by Luis Dominguez, naloxone outreach coordinator: [Narcan Training Video](#).