How do I know if I should use naloxone?
If you think someone is experiencing an opioid overdose, it does not hurt to give naloxone. Naloxone reverses the effects of opioids such as heroin, methadone, morphine, opium, codeine, hydrocodone, oxycodone, and fentanyl. It does not reverse the effects of other types of drugs like alcohol or stimulants like cocaine. If the person has taken mixed drugs and an opioid is involved, the person will likely start breathing but continue to be sedated from the other drugs.

Can naloxone be harmful?
Serious side effects of naloxone are very rare. The most common side effect is opioid withdrawal, since naloxone reverses the effect of opioids. Common opioid withdrawal symptoms include aches, irritability, sweating, runny nose, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting.

If you think someone is experiencing an overdose, give them naloxone. It can save them from brain damage or even death.

Where can I get naloxone?
You can get a kit from a local pharmacy without a prescription, though there may be a co-pay depending on your insurance. To learn more, visit preventoverdoseri.org/get-naloxone.

Understand Overdose
How do I know if it’s an overdose?
To reverse an overdose, you have to know what one looks like.

Look for these signs:
- Tiny, pinpoint pupils
- Slow and shallow breathing
- Unconsciousness and/or unresponsiveness

If someone is experiencing an opioid overdose and is given naloxone, they should wake up in two to three minutes.

If the person does not wake up in three minutes or loses consciousness again after 30 – 90 minutes, give them a second dose of naloxone. Stay with the person until help arrives.
How to Respond to an Overdose

1. Try to wake the person up
   Call their name and rub the middle of their chest with a closed fist.

2. Call 9-1-1
   The Rhode Island Good Samaritan Law protects you from arrest for helping anyone you think is having an overdose.

3. Give naloxone
   Follow the directions for nasal or intramuscular naloxone kits. The label may say “Narcan”.

4. Support Ventilation
   1. Start CPR as directed by 9-1-1.
   2. Push hard and fast in the center of the chest to the beat of the classic disco song, Stayin’ Alive.

5. Be prepared to give a second dose of naloxone
   If the person does not wake up in three minutes, give a second dose of naloxone.
   Put the person on their side with their body supported by a bent knee. This will help keep their airway clear and stop them from choking if they throw up.
   Naloxone typically wears off in 30 to 90 minutes.