

Overdose causes

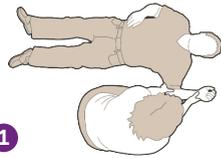
Firstly, remember to check

- A Airway
- B Breathing
- C Circulation (and bleeding)

Recovery position for adults

This is the best position for a casualty who is unconscious and breathing: place them on their side in the recovery position.

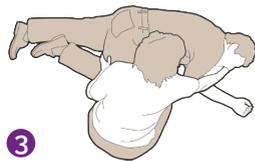
1. Place arm nearest you at a right angle.



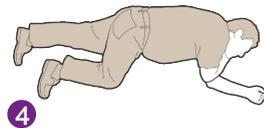
2. Move the other arm as shown, with the back of their hand against their cheek. Then get hold of the knee furthest from you and pull up until flat on the floor.



3. Pull the knee towards you, keeping the person's hand pressed against their cheek and position the leg at a right angle.



4. Make sure the airway remains open by tilting the head back and lifting the chin. Check breathing.



Naloxone

Naloxone is available through our Specialist Needle Exchange at Rosslyn House - 01302 730956. This is a lifesaving drug in the event of opiate overdose. It can be issued to anyone who injects heroin, or their partners or family members. Aspire staff will show you how and when to give someone Naloxone, and what to do after that.

Aspire Drug and Alcohol Services support people with drug and alcohol problems and their families to beat their addictions, and go on to successfully lead fulfilling, independent lives within their communities.

We do this by:

- Assessment
- Identifying and building your Recovery capital so that you develop sustainable Recovery skills
- Physical Health checks
- Psychosocial interventions
- Groups and social activities to build up a network of supportive relationships
- Help from mentors and peer support groups
- Social and Living skills
- Engaging in the wider community.

If you want help in reducing or stopping drug or alcohol use you can visit Rosslyn House at 37 Thorne Road, Doncaster, DN1 2EZ to get free confidential advice.



The Alcohol & Drug Service

Aspire Drug and Alcohol Services are provided in partnership by Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH) and The Alcohol and Drug Service (ADS).

NHS
Rotherham Doncaster
and South Humber
NHS Foundation Trust



BEATING ADDICTION
IN COMMUNITIES

OVERDOSE

You don't have to take a lethal amount of drugs to die of an overdose. This leaflet gives information and advice on how to spot and respond to an overdose.



  www.aspire.community

What to do in an emergency

The main things that cause overdose are:

- **Injecting drugs:** Heroin injectors are about 14 times more likely to die than non-injectors. People who inject heroin are much more likely to overdose than people who smoke it
- **Mixing drugs and alcohol:** Most overdoses happen when people have alcohol or downers like valium and temazepam in their system at the same time as heroin. The combined effect of sedative drugs is to depress the central nervous system and breathing. People can literally stop breathing
- **Using opiates when tolerance is low:** It only takes a few days for tolerance of opiates to drop. After a week or so without opiates, a dose that at one time wouldn't have affected you, can kill you. People who die have often overdosed before and survived. It isn't normally 'new users' who overdose. It's usually people who've been injecting for years
- **Sometimes overdoses aren't accidental:** Feeling depressed, hopeless or not caring whether you live/die can all make overdose more likely. Talking about feelings is important and can help reduce the risk of non-accidental overdose.



Reduce the risks

Drug and alcohol use always carries risks however you can reduce the risk of overdose by:

- Not injecting, but smoking, snorting or swallowing instead
- Avoid poly drug use. This means mixing or using more than one drug at the same time or on the same occasion
- Consider trying a smaller amount of a drug. You cannot tell what is in a drug or how it might affect you without testing it. Not knowing what is in a drug or how strong it may be can lead to overdose
- If you are feeling vulnerable to suicidal thoughts please seek help from family and friends or contact your local mental health services
- Look out for each other. This is always a good way to reduce the risk of overdose. If you stay with your friends there is a greater chance of being able to help each other in an emergency
- Take time out to rest, rehydrate and cool down. It is important to drink water but not too much as this can lead to problems. Dehydration and overheating can complicate an overdose
- Know what to do in an emergency. If someone becomes unwell or collapses it is best to respond as if it is an emergency. It is always safe to call an ambulance.
- If a person has overdosed and then appears to be better, it is important they do not use drugs again after being revived as they may overdose again.

Remember: Staying calm and calling an ambulance can save a life. South Yorkshire Ambulance Service will not call the police unless there is a risk of harm to ambulance staff.

Signs of overdose

Signs of overdose are:

There are a number of signs and symptoms that point out someone is in trouble. These differ with the type of drug used:

Stimulant Drug Overdose (e.g. Ecstasy, Speed, Cocaine, Amphetamines)

- Hyperactivity
- Rapid breathing or a feeling that you 'can't breathe'
- Difficulty passing urine
- Shaking / trembling / spasms
- Chest pain, pounding heart
- Raised temperature
- Body chills
- Disorientation
- Severe headache
- Vomiting
- Paranoid, delusional, agitated, irritable, anxious or psychotic behaviour
- Convulsions.
- Tingle in fingers and toes signs of heart attack and overdose

Depressant Drug Overdose (e.g. Heroin)

- Shallow pulse and breathing
- Blue lips, fingernails / toenails
- Snoring or gurgling
- No response
- Constricted pupils
- Disorientation
- Unconsciousness.

It is not necessary for someone to have all of these signs or symptoms for them to be overdosing. Only a few could still mean they are in trouble and need emergency help.