

Help Save a Life!

Recognize the signs of an overdose or other drug-related medical emergency

DRUG	INFO	SIGNS	WHAT TO DO
Alcohol	It is possible to die from drinking too much. Age, drinking experience, gender, the amount of food eaten, even ethnicity all can influence how much is too much. Cold showers, coffee and walking do not reverse alcohol overdose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• difficulty remaining conscious• vomiting / seizures• clammy skin• low body temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek medical help immediately. If someone is experiencing these symptoms, do not let them “sleep it off.”• If the person is unconscious, lay them on their side so they don’t choke if they vomit.
MDMA (a.k.a Molly or Ecstasy)	The most common drug-related emergency associated with MDMA is actually heatstroke, not overdose (taking “too much”) – though both can apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• faintness• inability to sweat• seizures• loss of consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek medical help immediately.• If in a hot, crowded environment and the person is still conscious, move them to somewhere cooler and calm.
Cocaine / Meth / Other Stimulants e.g. “Bath Salts” (Synthetic Cathinones)	With stimulants, risk of overdose increases with amount of use. Existing heart conditions, hot environments or strenuous physical activity also increase the risk of overdose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• chest pains• rapidly beating heart• high body temperature• extreme anxiety or confusion• heart attack, stroke or seizure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek medical help immediately.• If the person is having a seizure, make sure to move objects away from them that could cause injury.
Heroin / Opiates / Prescription pills e.g. Oxy, Vicodin, Demerol	It is possible to overdose with heroin and other opiate drugs whether you are snorting, injecting or taking them in pill form. The risk of overdose increases drastically if combined with alcohol and other “downers.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• awake, but unable to talk• body is limp• shallow or slow breathing• skin pale / ashen or clammy• loss of consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you have it on hand and know how to, administer naloxone.• Note that fentanyl and other synthetic opioids often found in heroin may require more than one administration of naloxone to work.• Even if you’ve administered naloxone, seek medical help.
Cannabis (a.k.a Marijuana)	While it is not possible to die of a cannabis overdose, with the rise of oils and edibles, people may ingest more than they intend to and experience uncomfortable highs which sometimes have serious physical effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• feelings of paranoia or anxiety• shortness of breath• shaking that is hard to control• feeling cold• nausea / vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure the person is in a place that feels safe to them and knows they are not in physical danger.• If the event has such a service, bring the person to the mental health space (e.g. Zendo Project or Kosmicare).• Seek medical help, especially if the person has trouble breathing or symptoms last more than 1-2 hours.