



## **MCFARLAND RADAR (Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) COALITION**

### **AODA PREVENTION SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER**

**AUGUST 2023**

# **Overdose Awareness Day (August 31st)**

In 2021, provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention yielded an estimate of 107,622 drug overdose deaths in the United States, an increase of 15 per cent from 2020. Two-thirds of these deaths involved synthetic opioids, primarily fentanyl.

International Overdose Awareness Day is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember those who have died, and acknowledge the grief of the family and friends left behind. The campaign spreads the message about the tragedy of drug overdose death and that drug overdose is preventable.

The goals of International Overdose Awareness Day are:

- To provide an opportunity for people to publicly mourn loved ones.
- To send a strong message to people who use drugs and people in recovery that they are valued.
- To inform people around the world about the risk of drug overdose.
- To provide basic information on the range of support services that are available.
- To prevent and reduce drug-related harm by supporting evidence-based practice.



## **Overdose Awareness Day Theme 2023**

The theme for this year's Overdose Awareness Day is about "Recognizing those people who go unseen," and honor the people whose lives have been altered by overdose. They are the family and friends grieving the loss of a loved one; workers in healthcare and support services extending strength and compassion; or spontaneous first responders who selflessly assume the role of lifesaver. They are the voices we should amplify, and their strength and experience should be held up as examples to us all. Too often, however, they are left to bear the burden of this crisis alone and in silence.



## Lowering the Risk of an Overdose

- Keep naloxone readily available on you and at home. You check with your local health department or community-based organization to see if they distribute naloxone at no cost.
- Avoid mixing drugs. Mixing multiple stimulants like methamphetamine and cocaine, depressants like opioids and alcohol, or a combination of both can cause harm and potentially death.
- Don't rely on a previous source or experience. Knowing where your drugs come from doesn't mean they're safe. And even if you have used drugs before, your body could react differently every time.
- Never use drugs alone. Make sure the people around you are aware when you have taken drugs in case they need to give you naloxone or call for emergency assistance.



## How to show supporting during Overdose Awareness Day

- Educate yourself about drug overdose: It's important to accurately recognize, and react accordingly to, a drug overdose. When someone overdoses on opioids, or another drug, they may be unresponsive to stimuli, have a shallow breath, blue lips or fingertips and may make gurgling or snoring sounds. If you see these signs, ensure their airway is clear and call 911 immediately. If the person has overdosed on an opioid (e.g., heroin, Oxycontin, etc.) and you have access to Narcan, give them one dose while on the phone with the emergency operator.
- Share helpful overdose information on social media: The International Overdose Awareness Day website offers a variety of free, downloadable resources for anyone to print or share on social media. These include fact sheets, logo assets, posters and infographics, among other resources.
- Host your own event with loved ones: By hosting your own event, even if it's with only a few people, you can help raise awareness in your community about the importance of overdose prevention and treatment for people who face addiction. You can get ideas for different activities online, register your activity and use the event organizer's support kit to orchestrate your event.
- Obtain Narcan, if it's available near you: In many regions of the United States that are severely impacted by overdose deaths, civilians may be able to purchase Narcan through a national pharmacy chain, like CVS or Walgreens, without a prescription. Depending on your community's specific events, public Narcan training may also be available on International Overdose Awareness Day.

# NARCAN

Naloxone is a medicine that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose. It is an opioid antagonist. This means that it attaches to opioid receptors and reverses and blocks the effects of other opioids. Naloxone can quickly restore normal breathing to a person if their breathing has slowed or stopped because of an opioid overdose.

Originally patented in 1961, naloxone gained approval in 1971 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for intravenous,

intramuscular, and subcutaneous administration for opioid overdose. Beginning in 1996 in the United States, programs providing naloxone kits and training in the use of naloxone were made available to the general public.

Such “take-home naloxone” programs were soon after developed in other countries and ultimately served an important role in preventing numerous deaths from overdose, particularly in Canada and the United States, where a crisis in opioid drug overdoses emerged in the late 1990s and continued into the first decades of the 21st century.

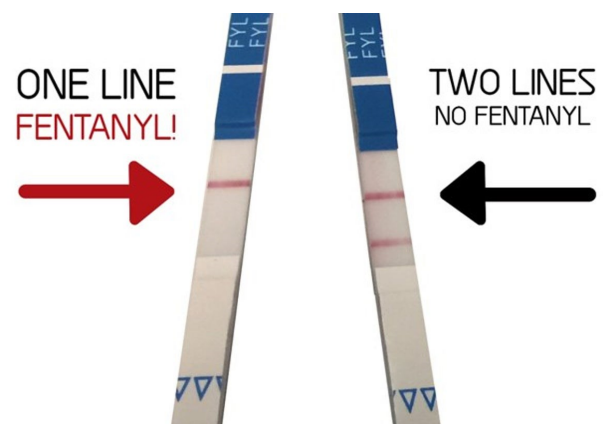
In the early 2000s naloxone was approved for prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) use in countries worldwide. Some of the first countries where naloxone was made available without a prescription included Australia, Canada, Italy, Northern Ireland, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. In 2015 the first nasal spray formulation, marketed as Narcan, was approved for use in the United States; in 2023 the FDA approved Narcan for nonprescription use.



## Fentanyl Test Strips

Fentanyl test strips (FTS) are a low-cost method of helping prevent drug overdoses and reducing harm. FTS are small strips of paper that can detect the presence of fentanyl in all different kinds of drugs (cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, etc.) and drug forms (pills, powder, and injectable).

They are easy to use. Simply place a small amount of the drug supply in crushed, crystal, or powdered form in a container. A container with the residue of the drug supply can also be used. Add about 1/4 inch of water to the container. If testing MDMA or methamphetamine, add about a shot glass of water to the container. Insert the fentanyl test strip in the water for 15 seconds. Take the fentanyl test strip out of the water and lay it flat for two minutes



McFarland is a small community south of Madison in Dane County. In January of 2017, a group of concerned citizens came together to discuss substance abuse problems in the McFarland area. The McFarland RADAR is a result of these meetings



For time, day and place of meetings, please contact Cathy Kalina at [CathyK@fsmad.org](mailto:CathyK@fsmad.org)

**We are comprised of local representatives from schools, businesses, churches, village administration as well as parents, and youth—all working together to promote healthy lifestyles**

**For more information go to: <https://www.radarmc.com/>**

### **McFarland RADAR Mission Statement**

***“The mission of McFarland’s RADAR Coalition is to promote healthy lifestyles in the McFarland area through alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education efforts.”***

***The McFarland RADAR (RADAR stands for Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) Coalition works to develop, implement and support environmental strategies to reduce substance abuse.***

***We believe by working together, we can nurture social and environmental changes to make the McFarland area a safer and healthier place, brightening the future of our children, youth and families.***

### **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

We are asking you to give the gift of time. Make a difference in the lives of our youth and our community by

1. Working with us in providing support for planning, project management and awareness campaigns
2. Helping with coalition events, conferences, workshops, and fairs held throughout the year.
3. Being a voice for change in our community, it is time to come together and be that force for change in the McFarland area.