

# OVERDOSE ALERT



## Drug-related harms including near fatal overdose and death have increased across **Scotland**

People have experienced sudden collapse requiring emergency health care after taking drugs.

Synthetic opioids, called nitazenes, have been found in various drugs including heroin. These have caused serious overdoses, hospitalisation and in some cases have been linked to drug-related deaths. **Knowing how to recognise and respond to an overdose can save lives.**

[www.stopthedeaths.com](http://www.stopthedeaths.com)

### HOW TO SAVE A LIFE

1. Recognise the signs of an overdose

2. Call 999

3. Carry Naloxone

# WOULD YOU RECOGNISE THE SIGNS OF AN **OVERDOSE**?



**STOP THE  
DEATHS**

**SUDDEN COLLAPSE**

**(AFTER SMOKING OR INJECTING DRUGS)**



**UNRESPONSIVENESS**



**SNORING OR NOISY BREATHING**



**BLUE LIPS**



**PALE SKIN**



*\* Signs of an overdose may also include shallow breathing, pinpoint pupils and seizures or fits.*



**CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY**

**ADMINISTER NALOXONE**



# 1. RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF AN OVERDOSE

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People have reported seeing or experiencing:

- Sudden collapse (recently reported in combination with some or all of the following)
- Unresponsiveness (no reaction to shaking or shouting)
- Snoring or noisy breathing
- Blue or pale lips and skin

*\* Signs of an overdose may also include shallow breathing, pinpoint pupils and seizures or fits (recently reported in combination with some or all of above).*

## 2. WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT AN OVERDOSE

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### CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY

- Ask for an ambulance and tell them it may be an overdose. Follow the instructions of the call handler which may include giving first aid.

### ADMINISTER NALOXONE (IF AVAILABLE)

- Naloxone temporarily reverses opioid overdoses, buying time until medical help arrives.
- **Where to get naloxone:** Free naloxone kits are available in Scotland, along with training. Visit [www.stophthedeaths.com](http://www.stophthedeaths.com) for more information.
- **How to use naloxone:** Naloxone should be given to anyone who is unresponsive and displaying the signs of an overdose. You may need to administer more repeat doses than usual, leaving 2-3 minutes between doses.

### STAY WITH THE PERSON

- Do not leave them alone. Keep them safe and monitor their breathing until help arrives.

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## 3. HARM REDUCTION: HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

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- **Don't use alone.** If possible, have someone with you who can respond in an emergency.
- **Use in turns.** If using with others, stagger your use so someone is alert to respond.
- **Always carry naloxone** if you or someone you know uses drugs.
- **Try to avoid knowingly mixing substances.** This is challenging when there are often multiple substances in the one drug but combining drugs (including alcohol and prescribed medication) increases overdose risk.
- **If someone is intoxicated, don't leave them alone.**
- **Test your drugs.** Use [wedinos.org](http://wedinos.org) for drug-checking services.
- **Seek support.** Get naloxone – from a local treatment service, harm reduction service or pharmacy.
- **Consider accessing treatment** – being in treatment is a protective factor against overdose. Contact your local treatment service.

## 4. FURTHER SUPPORT & RESOURCES

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All the links below can be found at [stopthedeaths.com](http://stopthedeaths.com)

- For more information and resources: [www.stopthedeaths.com](http://www.stopthedeaths.com)
- **Free online naloxone training:** SDF Overdose Prevention Course
- **Order a free naloxone kit:** SFAD Click & Deliver
- **Local drug support services:** Scottish Drug Services Directory
- **Needle exchange locations:** Scottish Needle Exchange Directory
- **Support for families** - If you are affected by someone else's alcohol or drug use, contact Scottish Families [www.sfad.org.uk](http://www.sfad.org.uk)
- **Share information about drugs with RADAR,** Scotland's Drugs Early Warning System
- For information and support By MY Side App

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