

# How to Recognize an Overdose of Alcohol or Other Drugs and What to Do



**Narcotic overdose:** Slow, shallow breathing, clammy skin, convulsions, respiratory depression and arrest, coma, death

**Depressant overdose:** Shallow respiration, clammy skin, dilated pupils, weak and rapid pulse, respiratory depression and arrest, coma, death

Sources: <https://awareawakealive.org>; Above the Influence; Taking Action to Prevent and Address Prescription Drug Abuse

## What to do:

- Call 911. Remain with the person until help arrives.
  - Remember the Law & Campbell policies are on your side. The NC Good Samaritan law allows you to call for medical assistance for someone without fear that you or the person receiving help will be charged with underage drinking or even drug possession (as long as it's a small amount).
  - Campbell does not want you to hesitate either. With our medical amnesty policy, you and the student receiving help will not get a formal alcohol violation if you call for medical assistance.
- If the person vomits, make sure the individual is lying on their side, not their back.

## What not to do:

- Don't try to argue.
- Don't put the person in a cold shower.
- Don't attempt to restrain the person.
- Don't try to make them eat.
- Don't induce vomiting.
- Know that the only thing that will sober an intoxicated person is time.

*Don't let common misperceptions stop you from getting help!*

**“DON'T WORRY  
SHE ALWAYS  
GETS THIS  
DRUNK”**

**📌 tanked or toxic? you make the call.**  
know the signs, get some help, save a life from alcohol poisoning.  
[www.awareawakealive.org](http://www.awareawakealive.org)

**“HE'S JUST  
SLEEPING  
IT OFF”**

**📌 drunk or dying? you make the call.**  
know the signs, get some help, save a life from alcohol poisoning.  
[www.awareawakealive.org](http://www.awareawakealive.org)

**“IT WON'T  
HAPPEN  
TO ME”**

**📌 then who does it happen to?**

## Life Saving Drug Naloxone (Narcan), Opioid Overdose Reversal Medication

An opioid overdose can be reversed with the drug [\*Naloxone\*](#), *available without a prescription in North Carolina*, when given right away. Many harm reduction advocates have campaigned, urging those who use Opioids to have Naloxone with them in case of an overdose. *Many Emergency Responders carry Naloxone in NC.*

Advocacy has resulted in the NC 911 Good Samaritan Law, which states that individuals who experience a drug overdose or persons who witness an overdose and seek help for the victim can no longer be prosecuted for possession of small amounts of drugs, paraphernalia, or underage drinking.

Please note recent studies conducted by the National Institute of Health report reversal of opioid toxicity may precipitate an opioid-withdrawal syndrome. At the same time, there is a risk of inadequate response or re-narcotization after the administration of a single dose of naloxone in patients who have taken large doses or long-acting opioid formulations, as the duration of effect of naloxone is shorter than that of many opioid agonists. *Because of this, it is important to seek medical treatment, even after using Naloxone for an overdose.*

Sources: <http://www.nchrc.org/law-enforcement/post-overdose-response-programs/>,  
<http://www.nchrc.org/programs-and-services/911-good-samaritan-laws-naloxone-access-and-syringe-law-in-nc/>,  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5753997/>