

Don't wait: Learn about overdosing now



August 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day around the world. It's a day set apart to focus on deaths caused by the overdose or misuse of prescription drugs, opioids, depressants, alcohol and/or stimulants.¹

What is an overdose?

When there are more substances in your body than it can handle, you may suffer an overdose. Even drugs prescribed by your doctor can cause a deadly overdose if you take the wrong amount, take them at the wrong time or mix them with other drugs.

The U.S. is number one

Usually, when the U.S. is a leader, we feel proud. But, in this case, the U.S. tops the world in substance overdose deaths. In the 12 months leading up to January 2017, over 64,000 Americans died from drug-related causes.¹ There's no pride in that.

What can we do to curb this tragic problem?

The most important thing you can do is get medical help if you or someone you know is misusing substances. Sadly, many people don't or won't admit their misuse. In some instances, they may not even realize they're at risk.

¹International Overdose Awareness Day. Accessed June 2019.

The EAP is administered by Resources For Living, LLC.

All EAP calls are confidential, except as required by law. Information is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment by a professional. Contact a professional with any questions about specific needs.

What are the signs of an overdose?

Someone may be suffering an overdose if he or she¹:

- Is unconscious
- Makes gurgling noises while sleeping
- Has seizures
- Has a very bad headache
- Feels chest pain
- Has breathing difficulties
- Acts paranoid, agitated and/or confused

These are common symptoms. But a person with an overdose may not show all these signs. Just one or two can be enough to cause concern.

What should you do if you suspect an overdose?

If you come upon a person who is unconscious or showing any of the symptoms above, call 911. If doctors or paramedics arrive in time, they can often help save a life. Never allow someone to sleep it off if you suspect an overdose. That could be a fatal decision.

Bottom line: Be aware and cautious

Certain drugs are helpful and others are simply dangerous. Misusing them — and other substances — is always cause for concern and action.