



OVERDOSE

HOW TO COPE IN A CRISIS

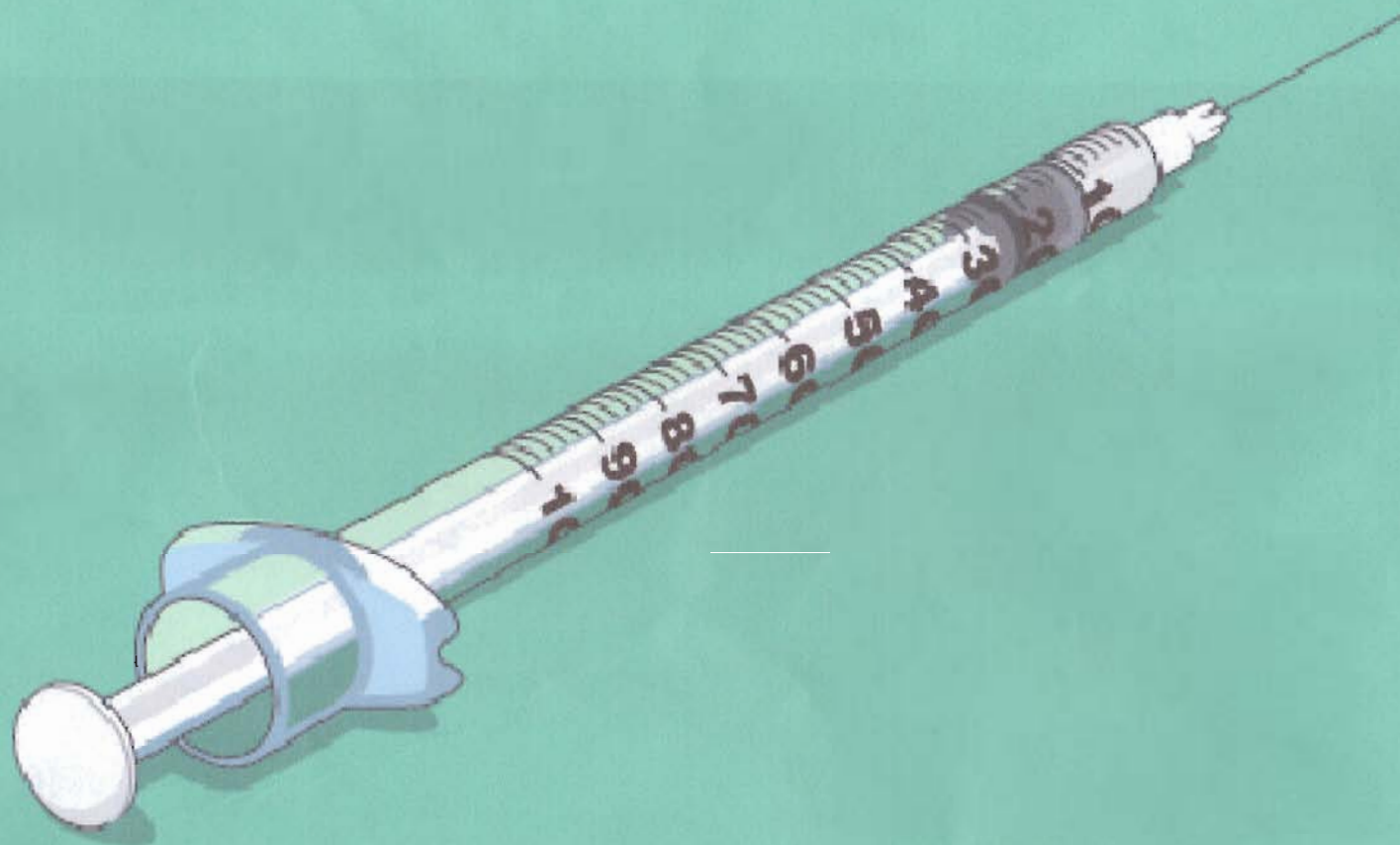
do's &
don'ts



calling
999

recovery

for injecting drug users



Lifeline Publications

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OVERDOSE

Quick Guide



Deaths from heroin overdose are preventable if you get help quickly. This leaflet shows you what to look out for and what to do in an emergency

Phone an Ambulance Straight away

Check Their Breathing

Put Them in the Recovery Position and Stay With Them



WHAT TO DO

Warning Signs



They look asleep
or unconscious



Their face or lips
look pale or blue



They are having
trouble breathing

1



If you think someone may
have gone over call their
name. If they don't wake-up,
poke them in the chest

2



If they don't respond, dial
999 **RIGHT AWAY** and ask
for an ambulance

3



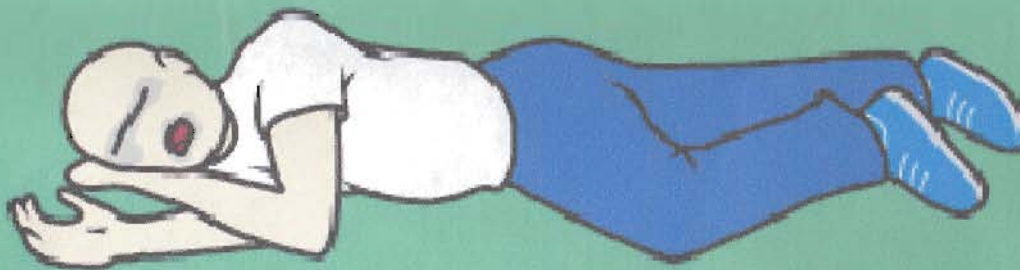
Tell the operator someone is unconscious and having trouble breathing. Give an accurate address

4



Make sure there is nothing stuck down their throat (like false teeth or vomit). If they stop breathing give mouth-to-mouth if you know how

5



Put the victim **ON THEIR SIDE** in the recovery position

6

Stay with the victim until the ambulance arrives. If you know, tell the paramedic exactly what the person has taken





RECOVERY

Q: How do I put someone in the recovery position?

1



Put the right hand by the head (as if they were waving)

2



Put the left arm across the chest, so that the back of the hand rests against the cheek

3



Hold the hand in place and lift up the left knee

4



Turn the victim on their side by pushing down on the knee



CALLING '999'

Q: Will I get into trouble if I call an ambulance?



NO

In Greater Manchester and other areas of the country, the ambulance service **WON'T CALL THE POLICE** unless there is a death, a child at risk or the paramedics are threatened with violence

Q: What should I say?



If somebody overdoses it is very important to call an ambulance **STRAIGHT AWAY**. Tell the operator that someone is unconscious and having trouble breathing — there's no need to mention drugs at this stage. Give an accurate address and **STAY WITH THE PERSON** until the paramedics arrive.



OVERDOSE PREVENTION

1

Go Easy After a Break

Heroin tolerance drops rapidly during a break in use. You are 34 times more likely to go over in the first 2 weeks after a prison sentence. What would have been a mild hit 2 months ago might be enough to kill you today. If you haven't used heroin for some time it's better to SMOKE the drug. If you are determined to inject, use the same amount you used on your very first time



2

Don't Mix Your Drugs

Mixing heroin with any other drug (especially depressants like alcohol, methadone and benzo's) increases the risk of overdose



+



+



+



VENTION

3

Taste the Hit

Inject a little of the drug and 'taste' the effects before emptying the rest of the barrel

A



B



C



4

Make a Pact

Never inject on your own. Talk to the people you inject with about what you would do if one of you were to overdose. Make sure everybody knows what to do in an emergency and make a pact to help each other if something goes wrong





DON'T...



DON'T inject them with anything or give them anything to eat or drink. It won't help and it might kill them



DON'T drag them outside or leave them in a phone box. Until the ambulance arrives their life is in your hands



DON'T splash them with cold water or put them in a bath. They may go into shock or drown



Opiate overdoses can be fatal unless you do the right thing and look after your mates



AT THE HOSPITAL

If you are unconscious because of a heroin overdose, either the paramedics or the A&E department at the hospital may give you a drug called NARCAN



NARCAN sends you into a rapid withdrawal. Whilst this saves your life, you will wake-up rattling. If you are lucky, they may give you something to cope with this

The hospital will NOT call the police unless you kick off. They will ask for your name and address to check your medical records. If you are under 16 they will call your parents or social services



DON'T run off to score straight away. NARCAN wears off after a couple of hours which means you could overdose once more, especially if you use again. Stay in the hospital until they say it's safe to go

For Further Information



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