# MAXIMISING OPIOID SAFETY

**Keeping naloxone in your home could save a life**

**Why are we talking about opioid safety?**

Opioid pain medicines are prescribed to help with pain, but it’s important to know about their risks

In Australia, 75 people are hospitalised and 2 people die every

*Common prescribed opioids include:*

*Codeine*

day from prescribed opioids, but these are mostly preventable You can take simple steps to reduce your risks

*Oxycodone Morphine*

*Tapentadol Fentanyl Buprenorphine*

**Why should I have naloxone at home?**

Naloxone **reverses the effects of opioids** if you or someone else has a severe reaction It’s safe - even if accidentally given to someone who has not taken opioids

In case of an emergency, you or someone else (e.g. a family member or carer) can administer naloxone while waiting for an ambulance – **this could save a life**

*Keep* ***naloxone*** *in your home as a part of your opioid safety plan*


## What are the most severe opioid-related risks?

Severe reactions *(loss of consciousness, slowed breathing)* can be fatal

This is sometimes called ‘overdose’ even when it happens from taking your prescribed dose

Severe reactions are quite common, and can sometimes happen even when you follow the directions - that’s why it’s important to be prepared

## What increases opioid-related risk?

### Taking extra medicine

*(e.g. for worse pain)*

### A mix-up with your medicines

*(e.g. accidentally doubling up)*

### Combining with alcohol or other medicines

*(e.g. sleeping pills or other pain medicines)*

### Other changes in your health

*(e.g. with your liver, kidneys, or lungs)*

### Someone else taking your opioid pain medicine



**Naloxone is available as a nasal spray**

**or injection**

**Naloxone is available at your pharmacy.**

**Ask your pharmacist today**

#  OPIOID SAFETY PLAN

## Share this plan with your family, friends or carer

**REDUCE YOUR RISK**

Do not mix opioids with alcohol or other sedative medicines

**MAKE A PLAN**

Keep naloxone in an accessible place at home.

Ensure that others in your home know what naloxone is used for, where it is kept, and how to use it

Familiarise yourself and others with the symptoms to look out for

Always stick to your prescribed dose

Use strategies to remember when you have taken your medicines *(e.g. webster packs, marking off on a calendar)*

*My naloxone is kept:*

(location)

Stick to the same doctor and pharmacist for your treatment

Ask your pharmacist or doctor about other ways of managing pain


##  RESPOND

 **RECOGNISE SYMPTOMS**

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

Many deaths can be easily prevented if people know what they are looking for

**1**

**Call an ambulance (000)**

Being extremely drowsy/very hard to wake up (like a deep sleep) or being slumped over

**Administer naloxone**

**2**

***Spray one dose into the nostril***

*If using the injection, inject one dose into the outer shoulder or thigh muscle*

***Note the time of administration***

*If no response after 2-3 minutes, repeat the dose*

Snoring or gurgling can be a sign of someone struggling to breathe because of opioids

A blue tinge to the lips or nails  Pinpoint pupils

**3**

**Place in the recovery position, and stay until help arrives**

Being cold and clammy



