



Canada's National Consensus Guidelines for Naloxone Prescribing by Pharmacists

More must be done about Canada's opioid crisis

Almost **1 in 9** (4.4 million) Canadians were prescribed opioids in 2020



In 2020, there were **6,214** opioid-related deaths in Canada



1/4 to 1/3 of opioid-related deaths in Ontario involve prescription opioids

The consensus guidelines recommend that **pharmacists provide naloxone proactively** to all patients receiving opioids.

Naloxone can be used to **help reverse an opioid overdose until medical help arrives**, and is available in both a nasal spray or injectable version.



A recent study in Ontario showed that only **1.6%** of patients receiving an opioid prescription were also dispensed a naloxone kit.

Until 2020, national guidelines for naloxone dispensing practices did not exist, meaning naloxone was not dispensed consistently from pharmacy to pharmacy.

Naloxone is not a replacement for emergency medical care.

According to the **Canadian national consensus guidelines** published in the Canadian Pharmacists Journal

All patients receiving an opioid prescription should be dispensed a naloxone kit

All patients should also be counselled by a pharmacist

Patient follow-ups are recommended at 3 mos. and 1 yr. after dispensing*

** Ongoing yearly follow-ups are also recommended*

Pharmacists play a critical role in helping to reduce the rate of opioid related harms. Every patient with an opioid prescription should be informed and counselled about naloxone.

Consult the respective product monographs for indication, contraindications, warnings, precautions and dosing guidelines.

Sources:

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