

# HOW TO START A CONVERSATION

## about opioids and naloxone with your patients



As a pharmacist, your patients count on you for important information regarding their prescriptions. If your patients take opioids, talk to them about the risks that come along with this medication and why it's important to keep naloxone nasal spray on hand.

Here are some tips to help you talk to patients with opioid prescriptions.

***Ask if you can share important opioid information.***

Let patients know that while opioids can be an effective pain management medication, accidental overdoses can happen at any time, even when taken correctly. Since "overdose" can have a negative connotation, it's suggested you use terms like "accidental overdose" or "overdose emergency."

***Help patients understand that taking too much opioid medication or taking opioid medications in conjunction with other certain prescriptions may cause their breathing to slow.***

This can be a sign of a potential accidental overdose. Let them know this is one reason why they should have an emergency treatment like naloxone nasal spray in their home.

***Tell patients that naloxone is a potentially life-saving medication they can get for free right at your pharmacy.***

Although naloxone isn't a substitute for medical care, it can help reverse the effects of an accidental overdose until help arrives. And it's now available for free at many local Iowa pharmacies like yours thanks to the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Board of Pharmacy.

***Let patients know you can fill out a prescription for naloxone for them.***

Although naloxone is a prescription medication, special access laws allow patients to get naloxone without a prescription from their doctor. With your help, patients can walk out of your pharmacy with this life-saving medication.

***Finish by suggesting patients tell friends and family members where they store naloxone in their home.***

By doing this, their family and friends can help save a life should an overdose emergency occur. You can also suggest they have an at-home safety plan in place.

**HELP PATIENTS BE PREPARED TO SAVE A LIFE.**

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