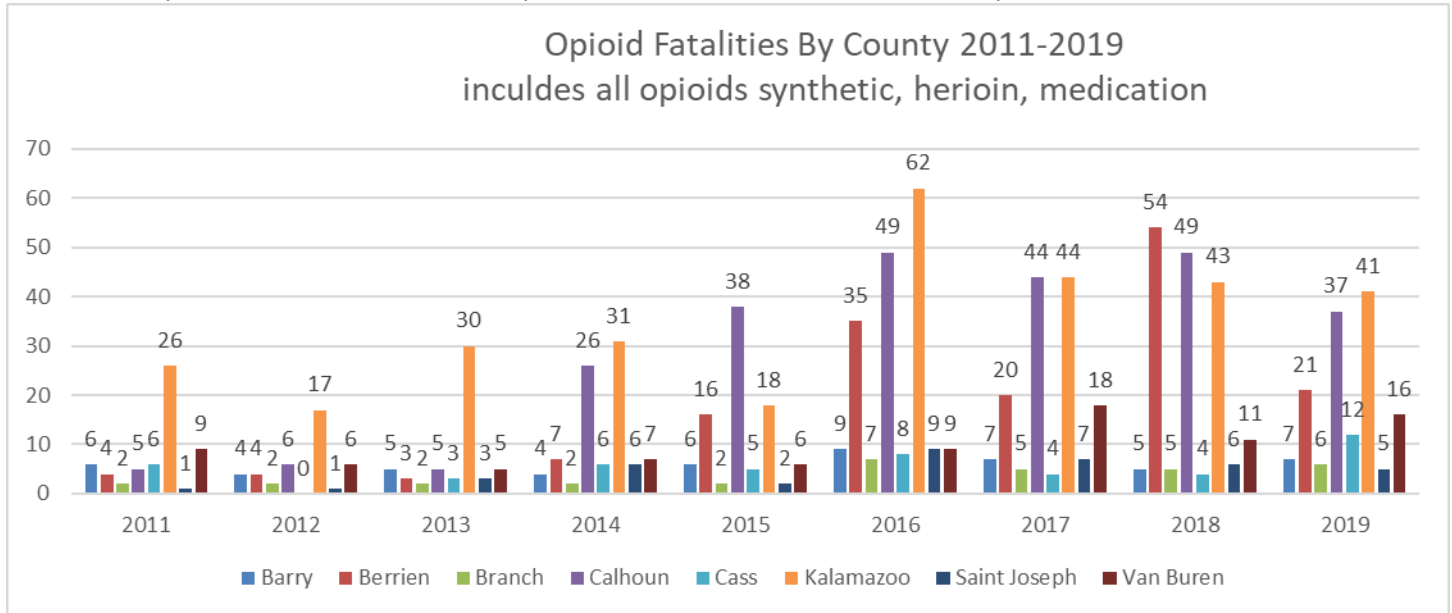


## Overdose: What can you do to help?

Accidental drug overdose has been rapidly increasing nationwide over the past 10 years. The same is true in the Southwest Michigan Counties (Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Van Buren). Overdose is the leading cause of accidental death of all people aged 21-65 in Michigan. Each year opioid/heroin use kills more people than car accidents. Because of the shame and stigma associated with drug use we often don't hear a lot about these deaths. Fortunately, there is something we can do about it. Most of these overdose deaths are caused by opioids and there is a simple and effective antidote to opioid overdoses. It is called Naloxone Hydrochloride, aka Narcan.



Naloxone is available through the Community Outreach Prevention and Education Network. Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health along with Kalamazoo Coalition on Opioid Awareness & FAN identified the need to prevent and respond to opioid overdoses with Naloxone Hydrochloride. In response to this increasing risk of overdose, COPE Network has adopted the Grand Rapids Red Project Naloxone Distribution response program and is funded by Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health. This program will address the opioid overdose problem on an individual level, but we would like to see overdose decrease on a community level. In order to see overdoses, decrease in Southwest Michigan, we must continue to increase the access people have to the knowledge, tools and support that they need to stay alive, including Naloxone.

So, what can you do to help? Overdose is a huge public health issue in our society right now. It is an issue that is too large to be addressed by a few people, or a few scattered organizations. We need everybody's helping to address this issue and to stop unnecessary death and the pain and trauma caused by it. We need people at risk of overdose to know what to do to prevent and respond to overdoses, we need people to talk about overdose, to erase the shame and stigma associated with it, and we need people to know about the life saving services provided through COPE Network.

**Learn more about COPE Network programs and overdose response trainings available or schedule a training.**

**Contact COPE Network @ (269) 580-8290, or email**

**[copenetworkswmi@gmail.com](mailto:copenetworkswmi@gmail.com); [copenetwork.org](http://copenetwork.org)**

Chart Source: Death Certificate Files, Vital Records and Health Statistics/MDCH

Recipients of substance abuse services have rights protected by state and federal law and promulgated rules. For information, contact (Amy Jonatzke 269-580-8290, or the Center for Substance Abuse Services, Recipient Rights Coordinator, P.O. Box 30035, 3500 North Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Lansing, Michigan 48909."

**Overdose: What can you do to help?**

**Know why people die** from overdoses: With an opioid overdose, or an overdose on downers, **people die because they stop breathing**. With stimulants a person's heart stops, or they have seizures or stroke.

1. **Know how to prevent** an overdose and risk factors for overdose:
  1. **Using Alone:** Behind closed, locked doors, where you can't be found, or no one knows about you.
    1. Prevention: Get high with a friend, leave door unlocked, let someone know. **DO NOT DRIVE**
    2. **NEVER USE ALONE Phone number 800-484-3731**
  2. **Mixing:** Overdoses are more likely to occur when mixing opioids with uppers or downers.
    1. Prevention: Use one drug at a time, or don't mix highest risk ones (opioids & Benzo)
  3. **Tolerance:** After not using for **even 3 days**, whether this be from jail, rehab, or choice, tolerance to opioids goes way down, and increased risk for fatal overdose.
    1. Prevention: **Use less than what you think you need**, do tester shots.
  4. **Quality: Fentanyl is in everything** (heroin or stimulants, laced with Fentanyl or Carfentanil, **Xylazine aka Tranq**) Prevention: Tester shots, release tourniquet, use reliable dealer, know what you're getting.
2. **Know how to recognize** an overdose: The line between being high and overdosing is **being UNRESPONSIVE**. Other signs: slow, shallow breathing, pale or blue color face and fingernails, snoring/gurgling breathing.
3. **Know how to respond.** Narcan is a safe medication to give to anyone you believe to be experiencing an overdose – even if you don't know what drug they consumed, it will only work on opioids but will do no harm if opioid are not the reason for unresponsiveness. Narcan works by being absorbed into the body neutralizing the opioid in the brain.

**If you know someone has used fentanyl you can give 2 doses right away and then rescue breath.**

**Assess**

**Stimulation-** are they overdosing, are they responsive?

**Call for help-** call 911. They may need additional medical attention. **Good Samaritan Law effective 1/2017**

**Airways-** Check to make sure their airways are clear.

**Rescue breathing-** Lift up on neck, and tilt head back and chin forward. 2 short breaths, then one breath every 5 seconds for 3-5 minutes.

**Evaluation-** are they getting any better? If not, do they need a dose of Naloxone?

**Administer**

**Mucosal Atomization (Nasal Spray)**—in a single application dispense one dose in one nostril, continue rescue breathing If fentanyl is suspected you can administer two doses one in each nostril and then rescue breathe

**Or**

**Muscular injection-** Inject 1-2 ccs in the thigh, shoulder, or butt, and continue to breathe for them

**Evaluation-** Are they getting better? After 5 minutes, with continued rescue breathing, if they have not come out of it, give them another shot or another dose of nasal naloxone in the other nostril continue rescue breathing. If xylazine (Tranq) is present they may still act sedated, monitor breathing, and rescue breath.)

**Aftercare** – be supportive, make sure they don't use more within 2 hours, they may also feel withdrawal sick

4. **Know what to do after an overdose:** Naloxone takes 3-5 minutes to work and wears off after 60-90 minutes. They may need another dose. Do not allow them to use more opioids, they will be wasting them and could OD again. Need to watch them for at least an hour-half in case the overdose returns.
5. **Talk to your friends and family** about overdose: What do they know about overdose, what do they want you to do if they overdose. You can't save yourself, so share, and help to erase some shame and stigma.
6. **Provide a referral:** A referral to the COPE Network program can literally save a life. Encourage your loved ones to gain access to the knowledge, tools and support that they need to stay alive.

**Learn more about COPE Network programs and overdose response trainings available or schedule a training.**

**Contact COPE Network @ (269) 580-8290, or email [copenetworkswmi@gmail.com](mailto:copenetworkswmi@gmail.com)**

**Check website for events and activities; [Copenetwork.org](http://Copenetwork.org)**

For more information about getting substance use treatment

**[www.SWMBH.org](http://www.SWMBH.org)**



**Online resource for learning rescue with naloxone**

**Responding to overdose with Naloxone**

**<https://redproject.org/learn/>**

