

## It's About Pain

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### **NARCAN—A Miracle Drug that can save lives**

**Narcan** is the much publicized drug that reverses the effects of narcotics. As such, it holds much promise for saving lives of people who are unconscious from unintentional or intentional narcotic overdose. It comes in a nasal spray and as in injection for IV or Intramuscular use.

**Narcan works** by binding to opioid receptors in the brain, instead of opioids doing so. Hence the brain does not flood with dopamine from the opioid.

**First Responders**, including police and firemen, now generally have Narcan for emergency use. Many medical and governmental organizations strongly recommend that patients taking opioids, have Narcan on hand.

**Narcan costs** \$20-40 for a one-dose injection, and a kit including 2 doses is \$124.39 at Fred Meyer, \$129.14 at Target/CVS, \$129.89 at Walgreens and \$131.89 at Walmart, each price uses a free coupon for the price. Nasal spray costs \$120-140 per Time Magazine.

#### **UNFORTUNATELY:**

- With a high dose of opiates, the patient **may need a second dose**.
- If the Narcan wears off before the opioid, **the patient may lapse back** and stop breathing.
- Narcan **does NOT WORK for overdoses of non opiates** such as amphetamine, methamphetamine, cocaine, alcohol, barbituates, antihistamines, benzodiazepines like valium, and propofol (the anesthetic that killed Michael Jackson).
- Some experts warn that serious **recreational users of opioids, may feel falsely secure** with narcan on hand, and may seek a higher "high" because they feel safer.
- Narcan is **NOT to be self-administered**, but rather by somebody else in attendance.
- Recreational opioid users **may not have a "Designated Observer"** on hand.

Bottom Line: **Narcan can save lives but details matter.**

**If you have a high Morphine Equivalent Dose of opioids or especially a substantial MED of Methadone, then you should have Narcan on hand. Most insurances are now covering Narcan.**

**Finally, recent research suggests Narcan may be an effective alternative to opiates in the treatment of fibromyalgia.**