

OPIOID OVERDOSE INCREASE

Suspected Opioid Activity Alert | April 7, 2020



The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and Public Health Madison & Dane County are issuing a public health alert due to an increase in suspected opioid drug overdose activity in Dane County from **March 29 to April 4, 2020**.

DHS identified 11 reports of suspected opioid drug overdoses seen at hospital emergency departments. This is a greater number of opioid drug overdoses than would otherwise be expected within a seven-day period based on Dane County's recent opioid overdose activity.

Public Health Madison & Dane County issues this alert to increase community awareness and advise first responders, healthcare professionals, and people who use drugs and their families of the increased risk for overdose in our community.

Currently, it is unknown as to what is driving this recent change in activity. It is possible that the composition of illicit street drugs in our community changed (including a mixture of opiates, fentanyl, carfentanil, and other synthetics).

This alert should serve as a notice to:

- Recognize the signs of an overdose:
 - Pale, sweaty or clammy skin
 - Lips or fingertips turn blue
 - Slow or irregular breathing: gasping, gurgling, or snoring
 - Difficult or unable to wake
- Always call 911 if you suspect someone is overdosing
- Avoid using street drugs alone; keep an eye out for your friends/family. With physical distancing orders in place, technology can be a great option.
- Have Narcan (naloxone) and be prepared to use multiple doses when necessary
- Contact 211 for treatment and recovery resources

Safe Communities launched a 24/7 helpline for Dane County residents struggling with addiction during the coronavirus epidemic. Alcohol and drug relapse rates increase with stress brought on by loss of income, social isolation, and anxiety. People struggling with substance use and their concerned family and friends can make a free call to (608) 228-1278 and talk to a Recovery Coach.

Resources for Providers

- [Addiction Medicine Consultation Line](#)
- [Project ECHO](#)
- [DHS Wisconsin Opioids Homepage](#)

Resources for the Community

- [Overdose Prevention-We Can All Save a Life Video](#)
- [Pharmacies Dispensing Naloxone](#)
- [Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline](#)