

August 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day. It is important to know what an overdose is, what it looks like and what to do if you suspect an overdose.

- **What is an Overdose?**
 - An overdose is when someone has more of a drug or combination of drugs than their body can handle.
 - Alcohol and prescription medications can also cause an overdose.
- **What are the signs of an Overdose?**
 - A range of signs can occur when someone overdoses, depending on the substance used, how much is taken and the health of the person at the time of the overdose.
 - Signs can include
 - Slow breathing
 - Chest pains
 - Severe Headache
 - Extreme paranoia or agitation
 - Snoring or gurgling – this can indicate difficulty breathing
 - Seizures
 - Lack of response when trying to wake them
- **What should I do if I suspect an Overdose?**
 - **CALL 911**
 - In New York State, The Good Samaritan Law protects anyone who seeks medical help for themselves or someone else during an overdose. The law also protects the person who overdosed.
 - This protection allows people to call 911 for help without fear of arrest for possession of small amounts of controlled substances, alcohol, marijuana or drug paraphernalia.
 - This does not protect someone from arrest for sale or intent to sell, open warrants for arrest, felony possession levels (8 ounces or more) or violation of probation or parole.
 - Do NOT let them “sleep it off”. If they are snoring, it could be a sign of a life-threatening emergency.

Sources:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/opioid_overdose_prevention/good_samaritan_law.htm

<https://www.overdoseday.com/resources/overdose-basics/>