

Understanding the Opioid Crisis in Cuyahoga County

Have you or someone you know been affected by opioid use disorder or opioid overdose? Overdose is the leading cause of accidental injury death in our community and across the United States. Many overdoses that claim the lives of family members, loved ones and friends involve an opioid.

Opioids include pain medications such as Percocet, Vicodin, OxyContin and other drugs like heroin and fentanyl. Fentanyl is a particularly lethal opioid because of its high potency and risk for overdose. In Cuyahoga County fentanyl is often mixed with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine. Many individuals may be unaware that the drug they are about to use contains fentanyl or another opioid, putting them at risk for overdose.

Fortunately, the opioid overdose antidote Narcan (a.k.a. Naloxone) is accessible to the public. Narcan is a safe medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. If it is administered to someone not experiencing an opioid overdose, no harmful effects will be experienced.

In an effort to save lives across Cuyahoga County, MetroHealth Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) launched an opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution program. Project DAWN provides free opioid overdose rescue response training as well as free Narcan kits to participating individuals through community trainings and in [various walk-in clinics throughout Cuyahoga County](#). If you or someone you know is interested, simply visit your nearest Project DAWN location during open hours and staff will provide you with a 15-minute training and free Project DAWN Narcan kit.

For additional information, check out this free [Opioid Use Disorder Information & Resource Guide](#).