

## Naloxone: Saving Lives Everyday

Naloxone also known as Narcan is a life saving narcotic agonist drug that is designed to instantly reverse opiate overdose when administered, by expelling or preventing opiates from binding to receptor sites in the brain. Initially available by injection the drug is now being widely administered intra-nasally as well.

Overdose is now the leading cause of accidental death in America even surpassing motor vehicle crashes. Here on Long Island alone an average of one person a day dies from an overdose of Heroin or other opiate drugs. Public officials have scrambled to address the issue by implementing several important measures; beginning in July of 2011 when the so called 911-Good Samaritan Law was signed into law. This pro-active action permits those in the company of someone who has overdosed to call 911 without fear of arrest or prosecution if in possession of minimal amounts of drugs or paraphernalia. Most overdoses occur in the company of others who typically try ineffective revival methods any historically did not contact emergency personnel out of fear of legal action

Most opiate overdoses occur when the respiratory system is depressed

According to the Suffolk County Health Department, in 2013 Suffolk County first responders were able to reverse 535 overdoses no doubt saving the lives of most of these folks utilizing Narcan. Through November of 2014 another 527 overdose reversal are attributed to this life saving drug, The reports indicate the figures could still rise with 118 additional deaths being investigated over that nearly two year period.

In Nassau County

In August 2012 the Internet System for Tracking Over Prescribing (I-STOP) bill was signed into law by Governor Cuomo. This action was aimed at identifying unscrupulous or negligent physicians and preventing doctor shopping or hopping where patients have gotten multiple prescriptions filled by different physicians who were usually unaware that the person already had one or more prescriptions for the same or similar medication.

A groundswell of support has taken root and communities across Long island the state and nationwide are organizing trainings for the general public.