



# Alaska Department of Health & Social Services

## SB 70 Opioid Overdose Drugs

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**House Health & Social Services Committee**

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# SB 70 Opioid Overdose Drugs

## Effects of an overdose

1

- Slows breathing

2

- Breathing stops

3

- Lack of oxygen may cause brain damage

4

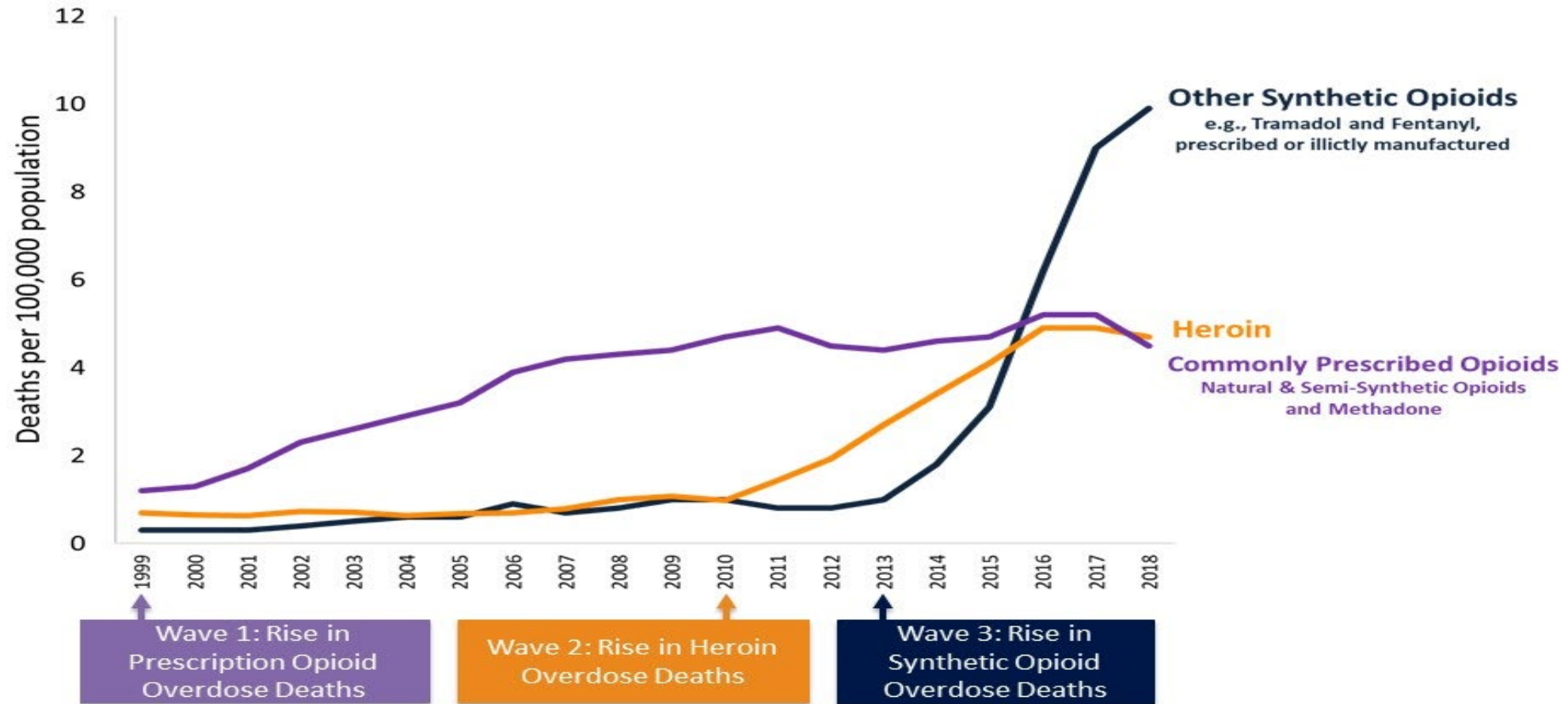
- Heart Stops

5

- Death

# SB 70 Opioid Overdose Drugs

## 3 Waves of the Rise in Opioid Overdose Deaths



SOURCE: National Vital Statistics System Mortality File.



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## Naloxone saves lives when administration is timely

Studies demonstrate the impact of naloxone:

- Safe
- No potential for abuse
- Reverses overdoses 75%-100% of the time

However, it needs to be timely:

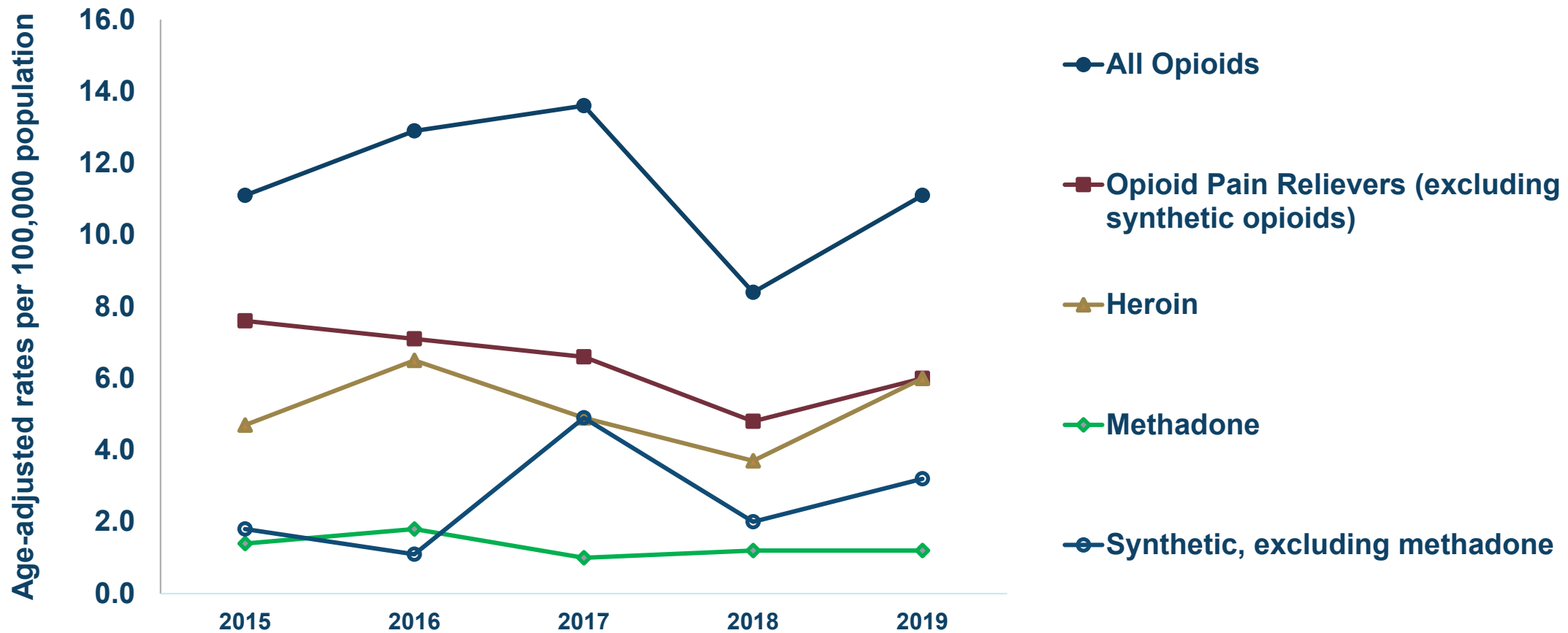
- A person who has a heroin-involved overdose may only have **20 minutes** before death.
- A person who has a fentanyl-involved overdose may only **have 2 minutes** before death.
- Brain and other organ damage from respiratory depression can occur **within minutes**.



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## Too many lives lost to overdose

Opioid Overdose Death Rates — Alaska, 2015–2019\*



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## Take home naloxone save lives

Saves lives worldwide.

Studies suggest having a naloxone distribution program in a community may avert up to 21% of overdose deaths.

Because of Project HOPE and the standing order, 94% of the people in Alaska's recorded Narcan administrations (n=330) survived.

“Yeah, we discuss it and I let everybody know that [rescue kits] are available, and I have several available at all times if I can.” – Project HOPE Beneficiary

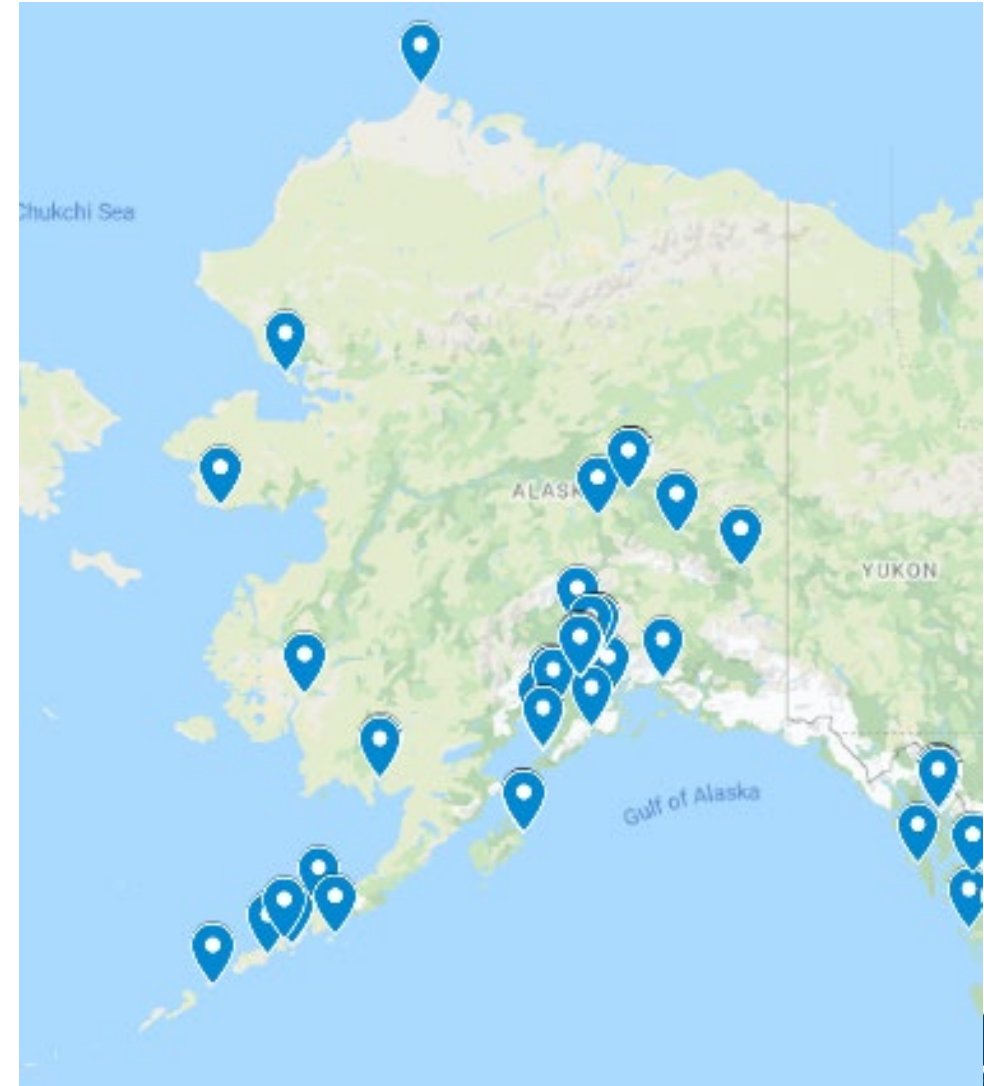


# SB 70 Opioid Overdose Drugs

**Standing orders enable take-home naloxone programs in Alaska**

Project HOPE is the State of Alaska's program that works with 30 different partners to distribute naloxone.

Project HOPE's mission:  
Reduce morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdose.



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**Funder:** 2016 SAMHSA 5-year grant; 2020 SAMHSA 2-year grant

Average cost of a Narcan Kit is \$74 and is fully funded by federal grants

**Section:** Office of Substance Misuse and Addiction Prevention (OSMAP)

## Outcomes:

- Over 41,000 Narcan Kits distributed that include education and connection to treatment resources
- At least 330 administrations, with at least 309 overdose reversals since 2017

Alaska News

## Volunteers assemble 'rescue kits' in hopes of preventing overdose deaths

✍ Author: **Marc Lester** ⌚ Updated: February 13 📅 Published February 12



About 35 volunteers helped package Heroin/Opioid Overdose Rescue Kits in a storage room at MyHouse, a homeless youth center in Wasilla on February 9, 2017. (Marc Lester / Alaska Dispatch News)

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## Saving lives saves money

### Economic burden of opioid crisis

Total opioid crisis economic burden in US  
between 2015-2018:  
**\$631 billion**

- *Lost lifetime earnings*
- *Loss in productivity*
- *Increase in child and family assistance*
- *Increase in incarceration*

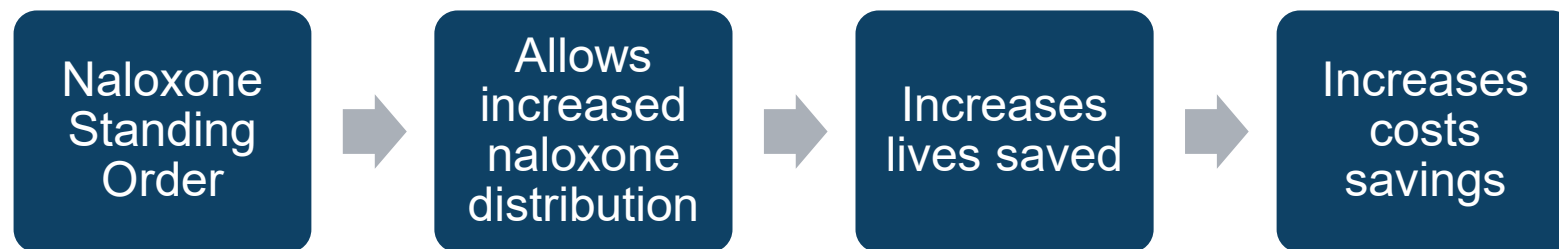
### Cost-effectiveness of take-home naloxone

- *Averting overdose deaths saves the cost of this economic burden.*
- *Mass distribution by lay persons, EMS and public safety of naloxone is most cost-effective; with lay person distribution making up much of this effectiveness.*



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Removing the sunset clause **saves lives** by allowing for a continued standing medical order for the distribution and administration of naloxone.



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## Thank You

[dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Director/Pages/opioids/narcan.aspx](https://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Director/Pages/opioids/narcan.aspx)





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## Reference Slides



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## References

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# SB 70 Opioid Overdose Drugs

## What is an opioid?

- Opioid analgesics/pain relievers
  - *Natural, synthetic, and semi-synthetic substances (excluding heroin) that bind to specific opioid receptors in the Central Nervous System, producing an agonist action. They increase the threshold to pain.*
- Heroin
  - *A semi-synthetic opiate synthesized from morphine. It is broken down into morphine.*
- Fentanyl
  - *A potent synthetic opioid drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use as an analgesic and anesthetic.*

# SB 70 Opioid Overdose Drugs

## From Prescription Opioids to Heroin to Fentanyl

Approximately 3 out of 4 new heroin users report having misused prescription opioids in the past (NIDA, 2015)

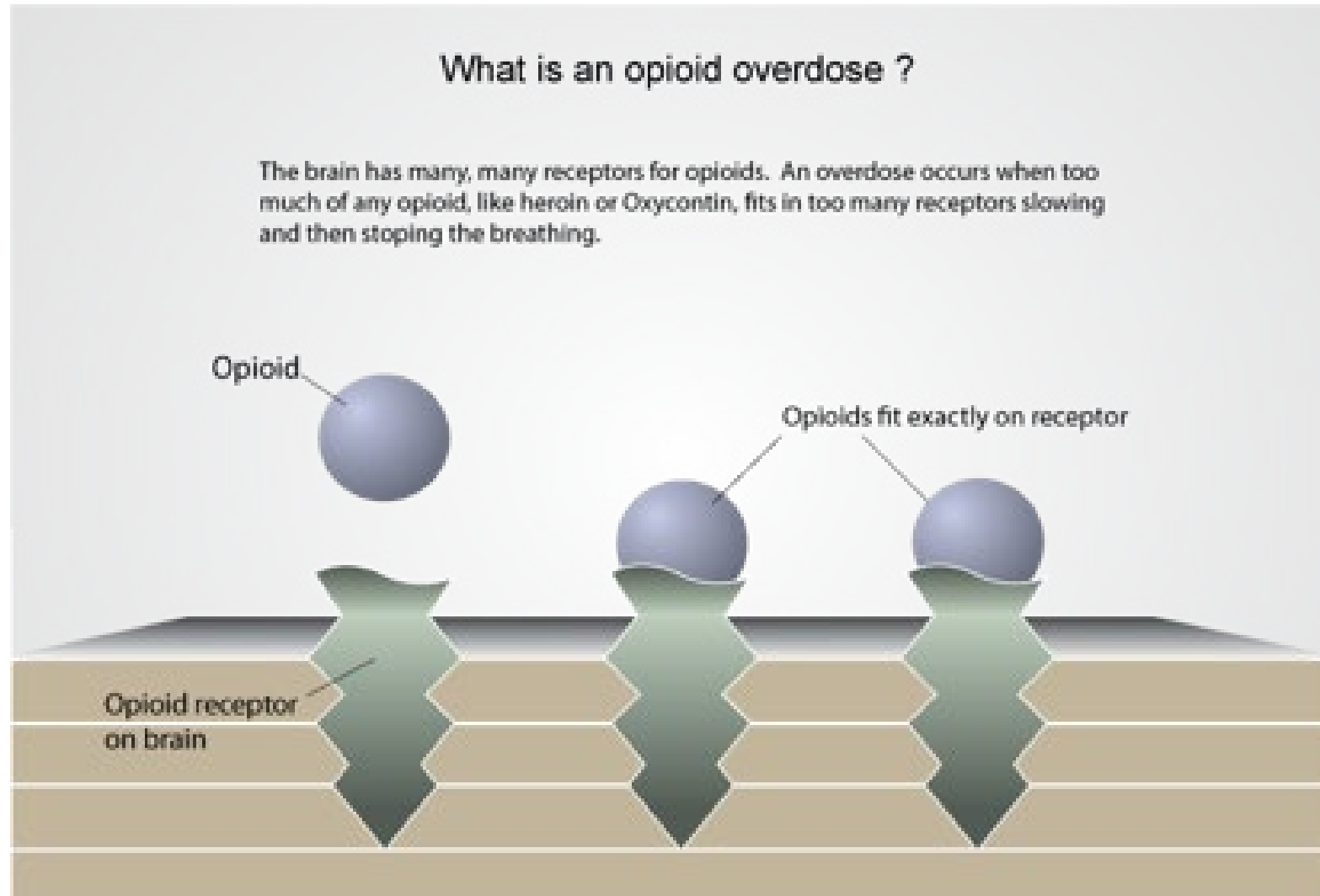
In some places, easier access to heroin than prescription opioids

- Heroin does not require a prescription
- Street price for heroin may be more affordable than prescription opioids

Higher risk of overdose from fentanyl use due to potency



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Credit:  
National  
Harm  
Reduction  
Coalition

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