

# Pharmacists and naloxone: Let's talk about it!

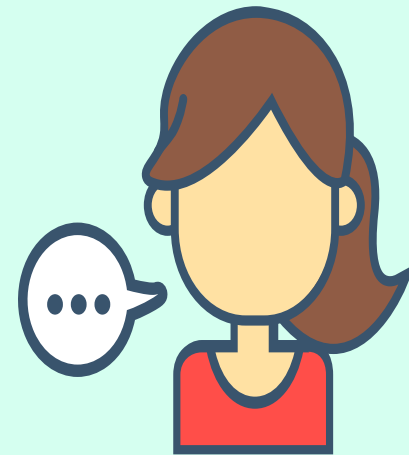


Indiana State  
Department of Health

## Consumer-related barriers to receiving naloxone

Consumers often go through many emotions when trying to receive naloxone at a pharmacy, such as:

- Embarrassment when asking about naloxone at the pharmacy
- Fear of future consequences if they ask for naloxone at the pharmacy
- Fear of being labeled as an "addict" by the pharmacist
- Fear of getting labeled as a "criminal" by police if discovered carrying naloxone
- Misconception that naloxone is only for someone using heroin



It is important as a pharmacist to use appropriate language when discussing naloxone and opioids with patients.

### Say this ... Not that

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|---|---|
| 1. "I would be happy to get you some naloxone."   | 1. "You want WHAT? That heroin stuff?"  |
| 2. "Let me check what we have in stock."  | 2. "Hey, Bill, this guy wants some of that naloxone!"   |
| 3. "Due to our statewide standing order, no prescription is required."  | 3. "I think we have that, but you need a prescription."   |
| 4. "If you are concerned about the price, you can check with your local health department about acquiring a free dose." | 4. "Are you sure? It's really expensive."   |
| 5. "Let me explain the administration of naloxone in case you witness or experience an overdose."                       | 5. "Are you an IV drug user? Who in your family uses drugs? I can only give it to you if you really need it." |

## Ways to start the conversation

As a pharmacist, it is important to know how to approach the subject of naloxone and opioids.

Start conversations by saying:

- "Can we talk for a moment about the medications that you are taking to help manage your pain?"
- "Has anyone talked to you about which medications you should avoid while taking an opioid?"
- "Can I talk to you more today about how to stay safe while taking opioid pain medications?"
- "I am recommending that you get naloxone today. The medications you are taking can cause slowed breathing or even death. Naloxone is an antidote that you can keep on hand to reverse an overdose. Is it okay to provide you with naloxone today?"

Use the correct  
language: 