



Jackson County Department of Public Health

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INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

August 31 is recognized as International Overdose Awareness Day and is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember those who have died, and acknowledge the grief of the family and friends they left behind. This campaign also spreads the message about the tragedy of drug overdose deaths and that drug overdose is preventable.

The Jackson County Board of County Commissioners have declared September as Jackson County Opioid Awareness Month.

Sadly, eighteen (18) Jackson County residents lost their lives to opioid overdoses in 2022 alone. In addition, Jackson County has a higher rate of medication and overdose deaths, and opioid-related deaths compared to the state rate and three of the four surrounding counties.

Recognizing an overdose can be difficult. If you aren't sure, it is best to treat the situation like an overdose—you could save a life. Call 911 immediately. Administer [naloxone](#), if it's available. Do not leave the person alone. Signs of an overdose may include:

- Small, constricted "pinpoint pupils"
- Falling asleep or loss of consciousness
- Slow, weak, or no breathing
- Choking or gurgling sounds
- Limp body
- Cold and/or clammy skin
- Discolored skin (especially in lips and nails)

[Naloxone](#) can reverse an overdose from opioids, including heroin, illicitly manufactured fentanyl and fentanyl analogs, and prescription opioid medications. Often given as a nasal spray, naloxone is safe and easy to use.

You should carry naloxone if:

- You or someone you know is at increased risk for opioid overdose, especially those with opioid use disorder (OUD).
- You or someone you know are taking high-dose opioid medications prescribed by a doctor.
- You or someone you know have both opioid and [benzodiazepines prescriptions](#) or use illicit substances like heroin or [fentanyl](#).



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The Jackson County Department of Public Health received the Prevent Drug Overdose Death (PDO) grant in December of 2022. Funds from this grant are used to increase community awareness, as well as educate and provide free Naloxone kits to our community. Medication lockboxes are also available to the community at no cost and can be acquired from the Jackson County Public Library.

JCDPH staff will be at the International Overdose Awareness Event on Thursday, August 31, from 6 PM- 8 PM at the Bridge Park in Sylva. Staff will be giving away free Naloxone and medication lock boxes.

To learn more about the PDO grant initiatives or to schedule a Naloxone training call Meagan Cagle, Health Education Supervisor, at 828-587-8280.

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