

Opioid poisoning and it's treatment or management

Prepared for-Msc 2nd sem by B.Banik

*Opioids are substances derived from the opium poppy, or synthetic analogues with similar effects. An **opioid overdose** is toxicity due to excessive opioids. Examples of opioids include morphine, heroin, fentanyl, tramadol, and methadone. Symptoms include insufficient breathing, small pupils, and unconsciousness. Onset of symptoms depends in part on the route by which the opioids are taken.*

Opioid use disorders resulted in 122,000 deaths globally in 2015, up from 18,000 deaths in 1990. In the United States, over 49,000 deaths involved opioids in 2017. In 2017, opioid deaths represented more than 65% of all drug overdose related deaths in the United States.

Opioid overdose

Due to their effect on the part of the brain which regulates breathing, opioids in high doses can cause respiratory depression and death. An opioid overdose can be identified by a combination of three signs and symptoms referred to as the “opioid overdose triad”. The symptoms of the triad are:

- *pinpoint pupils*
- *unconsciousness*
- *respiratory depression.*

Combining opioids with alcohol and sedative medication increases the risk of respiratory depression and death, and combinations of opioids, alcohol and sedatives are often present in fatal drug overdoses.

Treatment of Opioid poisoning

Death following opioid overdose is preventable if the person receives basic life support and the timely administration of the opioid antagonist naloxone. Naloxone, which is effectively an antidote to opioid overdose, will completely reverse the effects of an opioid overdose if administered in time. Naloxone is effective when delivered by intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intranasal routes of administration. Naloxone has virtually no effect in people who have not taken opioids.