



Risk Factors for Overdose – What are risk factors for Overdose?

A range of factors including the individual, social, community, environment, and social determinants of health can increase overdose risk. Here are social and behavioral health factors we have identified across our states in completing Root Cause Analysis* on clients who have died by overdose.

Food and housing insecurity	Screenings for social determinants of health will assist in identifying those at risk of food insecurity and housing stability and resource needs.
Legal Involvement	Release from jail or pending legal placement.
Health and behavioral health factors	Comorbid conditions, depression, chronic pain, trauma exposure, previous non-fatal overdose history, multiple treatment episodes and long-term SUD use and history.
Lack of Social Supports	Coping with loss of relationships, custody or contact with children, relationship dysfunction, or family member illness.
Transitions in Care	Transitioning from residential SUD, recovery housing, inpatient detox, residential care, hospitalization increases risk due to tolerance loss. Anytime an individual goes off monitoring from probation, parole, problem solving court or community corrections, overdose risk is increased due to the external motivation decrease and tolerance loss.
Recovery Supports	Never Use Alone, AA/NA, Brave App, 2-1-1 Harm Reduction Education Resources exist, refer to your local resource directories and become familiar with those in your community.
Tolerance Loss	Tolerance loss occurs during any period of sobriety, and harm reduction and overdose risk should be reviewed often.
Naloxone Availability	Naloxone and fentanyl test strips help provide critical intervention in harm reduction and lifesaving support. You can find Naloxone distribution sites here: Substance Use Disorder Help and Prevention – Overdose Lifeline (Indiana Specific Resource at this time)

The purpose of these reviews is to identify root causes of the incident, and to create improvement plans based on our findings. We are focused on issues with our system, and NOT individual blame for incidents that occur.



Considerations for Treatment:

- Seek guidance from your clinical supervisor if you are noticing any of the range of risk factors that may increase overdose risk
- Follow up with your client with how they are coping with their unique life circumstances
- Drug Screening as a clinical tool to address use, outcomes management, and treatment considerations
- Complete an identified Risk Assessment, as available and identified by your State Business Unit, AUDIT-C, ASAM, Harm Reduction or document Relapse Prevention efforts
- Review Harm Reduction options often with persons at risk
- Continue to check in with their overall functioning

If you have clients that have multiple risk factors for overdose, engage often, and ensure you are checking in with them on how they are coping with these major life disruptions, review their social support systems and recovery supports through care coordination activities. People can overdose on a lot of substances, including alcohol, Tylenol, opioids, prescription drugs or a mixture of drugs.

Next Steps:

- **Collaborative approach:** Work closely with other providers such as psychiatrists or psychologists for a coordinated treatment plan. Coordinate with referral sources to ensure comprehensive collaborative care. A referral for psychological testing to help with determining comorbidities may help with targeted interventions
- **Evidenced based psychotherapies:** Utilize EBP's that are effective for Substance Use Disorder treatment and ensure that harm reduction is reviewed often and regularly, such as MRT (Moral Reconciliation Therapy), CBT for Substance use, MAT (medication assisted treatment), relapse prevention, couples therapy, 12-step facilitation, mindfulness and community reinforcement and ensure intensive care coordination is available for those at risk
- **Psychoeducation:** Educate clients and their natural supports about Overdose Risk and Harm reduction and recovery supports
- **Monitor Progress:** Regularly evaluate effectiveness of treatment plan and make adjustments. Utilize the available assessments at the clinical frequency recommended
- **Supportive Environment:** Create a safe and supportive environment. Encourage open communication about challenges and experiences.
- **Encourage Self Care:** Promote self-care practices, such as exercise, healthy eating and hydration, and good sleep hygiene.

Citations and Resources:

- *National Library of Medicine - [Behavioral Treatments for Alcohol Use Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PMC](#)*
- *World Health Organization - [Risk Factors for Drug Overdose in Young People: A Systematic Review of the Literature - PMC](#)*
- *Overdose Lifeline - [Substance Use Disorder Help and Prevention - Overdose Lifeline](#)*

How to contact Centerstone's PSO:

For any questions regarding this communication, or any other patient safety related concerns, please email patient.safety@centerstone.org.