



Memphis-Shelby County Schools Department of School Operations

Oct. 31, 2023

Opioid abuse happens in communities all across the United States and involves not only adults but also children. Opioids are a class of drugs that include the street drug heroin, the synthetic drug fentanyl, and pain relievers, such as morphine and hydrocodone, which are available legally with a doctor's prescription.

Opioid overdose can be deadly, and drug-involved overdose deaths have been on the rise. In response to this public health crisis, Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) has established the Opioid Antagonist Program. Beginning Nov. 1, 2023, all District schools will have an opioid antagonist, such as naloxone (Narcan), available in case of an overdose emergency. Designated school staff have been trained on how to store and administer the opioid antagonist.

What is an opioid antagonist? An opioid antagonist is designed to rapidly reverse opioid overdose. By binding to opioid receptors, opioid antagonists block the effects of other opioids, helping to prevent overdose deaths.

When is it used? An opioid antagonist is administered when a person is showing signs of opioid overdose. It is a temporary treatment, and its effects do not last long. If your child shows signs of drug overdose at school and is given an opioid antagonist, you will be called. The school will send your child to a hospital emergency room by ambulance for medical intervention.

How is an opioid antagonist administered? Opioid antagonists are available in several forms. MSCS schools will have the nasal spray.

