

Naloxone Administration by Emergency Medical Services (EMS), 2023 Q1-Q4

Background

Naloxone is a medication used for the emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose. It has no negative side effects if given to a patient who has not taken opioids, so it is sometimes given to rule out opioid overdose.

This report describes all naloxone administrations (regardless of opioid involvement) documented by EMS providers during calendar year 2023. The data comes from the Montana EMS incident dataset. (PLEASE NOTE: This report includes both NEMSIS 3.4 and NEMSIS 3.5 records. Montana began transitioning to NEMSIS 3.5 in Sept 2023. When interpreting this data, please keep in mind that there may be some data quality issues due to the transition.)¹ Montana statute requires that licensed ground and air transporting EMS agencies submit a patient care report (PCR) to the dataset for each patient they encounter. Non-transporting agencies may also submit data. Therefore, the dataset may contain multiple records (EMS activations) that pertain to the same patient or incident.

This report includes EMS activations with an incident date between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023, where the scene location is in Montana. EMS activations are labelled as opioid-related if they meet the [Montana opioid overdose syndrome criteria](#).²

Data Limitations

- Numbers in this report are provisional and subject to change due to latent record submissions or updates
- Data quality issues
- Does not capture most naloxone administrations by law enforcement or the public

Results

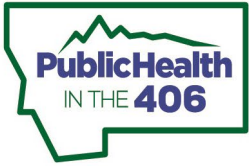
There were **825** EMS activations with a total of **1,067** naloxone administrations documented during 2023. According to the available data, **2,432 milligrams (mg)** of naloxone were administered – however, this total does not include data from records missing dosage information. *There were an additional 824 EMS activations where naloxone was mentioned in the patient care narrative but not documented in the medication fields.* Ground transporting agencies provided the greatest amount of naloxone compared to other types of EMS agencies.

EMS Agency Type	Naloxone	
	mg	%
Ground Transporting Agency	2,211	90.9%
Non-Transporting Agency	213	8.8%
Rotor Wing	7	0.3%
Fixed Wing	0	0.0%
All	2,432	100.0%

Of 825 EMS activations where naloxone was given, nearly half (**N=389, 47.2%**) were NOT classified as opioid overdose-related (Figure 1). The most common types of non-opioid patients that received naloxone were

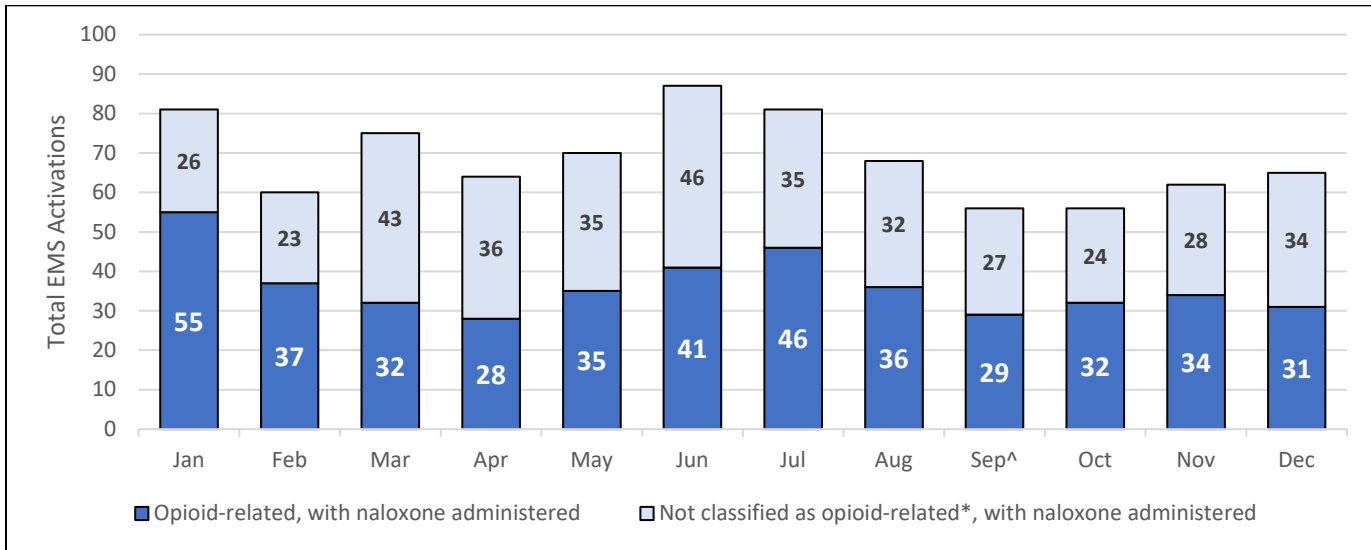
¹ This report includes both [NEMSIS v3.4.0](#) and [NEMSIS v3.5](#) records

² Version 10.14.2022



cardiac-related (141 activations), altered level of consciousness (133 activations), alcohol or non-opioid drug overdose (47 activations), and mental health or behavioral crises (25 activations).

Figure 1. Opioid-related versus non-opioid EMS activations with naloxone administered by month, 2023 Q1-Q4



* See [Montana opioid overdose syndrome criteria](#)

How to Access Naloxone

In order to increase timely access to naloxone, an online ordering process for organizations and facilities was adopted in 2022. Organizations may acquire naloxone through the [DPHHS Order Authorization Form](#) and distribute to eligible recipients as defined by Mont. Code Ann. § 50-32-603(5)(a)-(i). Eligible recipients include:

- An individual at risk of an opioid-related overdose
- Family, friends, or other person in proximity to a person at risk of opioid-related overdose
- Others as listed on Montana's [standing order](#)

DPHHS encourages public health departments, the criminal justice system, behavioral health providers, harm reduction organizations, programs that serve veterans, and Montana Tribes to utilize this ordering process to have naloxone on hand for staff and to get naloxone into the hands of the end user.

- DPHHS and its contractors will use the information from the form to track naloxone distribution and to conduct other public health and epidemiological surveillance activities.

This online ordering process is not for individuals, Individuals can obtain naloxone for free from one of the [organizations that have naloxone](#) listed on the DPHHS website.

To learn more, contact naloxone@mt.gov or visit [Naloxone \(mt.gov\)](https://www.mt.gov/naloxone)

For further information, please visit our website: [Injury Prevention Program](#)

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