**Universal Precautions**

Many times when someone gets a prescription for opioid analgesics (pain medication), they are asked to sign a pain agreement. When this happens, it means your health care provider is using Universal Precautions, a tool to improve communication between patients and doctors.

These things are part of Universal Precautions:

- Use of Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) by doctors & pharmacists
- Random pill counts for patients
- Urine testing for patients
- Substance use disorder screenings

**To learn more about pain medications and Universal Precautions, talk to your health care provider.**
Take this quiz and find out.

In 2010, there were 167 drug overdose deaths in Maine, compared to 34 in 1997. That’s a 400 percent increase.

In Maine, there are more deaths from drug overdoses than from car crashes.

You may be surprised by who is at risk for a drug overdose.

- Have you been prescribed an opiate for the very first time?
- Do you take a high dose of an opioid prescription? (More than 120 mg/day)
- Have you had recent emergency medical care involving opioid poisoning, intoxication, or overdose?
- Have you recently been released from jail or prison?
- Do you take an anti-depressant?
- Do you drink alcohol?
- Do you live in a rural area where it is hard to get medical care?
- Have you recently finished a opioid detox program?
- Do you have kidney disease or renal dysfunction?
- Do you smoke?
- Do you have COPD or emphysema?
- Do you have asthma or sleep apnea?
- Do you take a benzodiazepine (Xanax, Valium, Ambien)?
- Do you have a history of substance use?
- Are you in methadone or buprenorphine detox treatment for addiction or pain?

If you checked any of these questions, you may be at risk for overdose.

Signs & symptoms of overdose:
- Not breathing
- Turning blue
- Not responding
- Snoring deeply
- Central nervous system problems (confusion, vertigo, nausea, vomiting, seizures)

Sternal (chest) rub:
To check if someone is unresponsive, use the sternal (chest) rub.

What to do:
- Call 911
- Place the person in the recovering position, on his/her side (see picture below)
- If the victim is not breathing:
  - Place the person on his/her back
  - Open the victim’s airway
  - Pinch the victim’s nose shut
  - Seal your mouth over the victim’s mouth and give him/her a breath
  - Give the victim one breath every five seconds until help arrives, or he/she starts to breathe on his/her own

Recovery position: