



**BERRIEN COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
better health. stronger communities.

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Gillian Conrad

(269) 927-5624

[gconrad@bchdmi.org](mailto:gconrad@bchdmi.org)

## **Berrien County Health Department Recognizes International Overdose Awareness Day, Offers Free Narcan® Kits**

**Benton Harbor, Michigan** -- In recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day, the Berrien County Health Department and the Voice. Change. Hope. Alliance is providing community members free naloxone (Narcan®) nasal spray kits through Aug. 31. Naloxone or (Narcan®) is a drug that temporarily reverses the dangerous effects of an opioid overdose.

Individuals 18 and older can visit the following participating Walgreens locations to pick up a free kit, anonymously, without a prescription, insurance or identification. Kits will include two doses of Naloxone, a mouth shield, gloves and written instructions as well as additional community resources.

- Walgreens #11265: 1710 W. John Beers Road, Stevensville, 269.429.1153
- Walgreens #03364: 907 S. Eleventh St., Niles, 269.683.0234

[International Overdose Awareness Day](#) is recognized globally on Aug. 31 to raise awareness about the risks of overdosing, honor the individuals whose lives have been lost, acknowledge the grief felt by families, friends, and the community and work to challenge the stigma associated with substance use disorders and overdosing.

In 2020, more Michiganders died from drug overdoses than any year prior. Last year, 2,684 Michigan residents died from drug overdoses, a 14 percent increase over 2019, with 42.5 percent of those individuals being Black. Lockdowns and other pandemic restrictions isolated those with drug addictions and made treatment harder to access, which may have contributed to these increases. This is a trend that was mirrored [nationally](#) with a record 93,000 people across the United States dying of drug overdoses in 2020. In Berrien County, [drug overdose deaths](#) increased from 15 deaths in 2019 to 18 deaths in 2020.

Opioid overdose, in many cases, is preventable. One way to combat overdose is to increase access to the life-saving drug Narcan, which is the first FDA-approved nasal form of naloxone, used for emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose. Anyone with an opioid prescription or knows someone who uses opioids should keep Narcan on hand and make sure friends and family know the signs of an overdose.

Learn more at the Berrien County Health Department website  
<http://bchdmi.org/1706/VoiceChangeHope-Alliance>.

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