EMS Overdose Case Definitions

June 2, 2025

**NOTE**: EMS overdose reports prior to November 2023 should not be compared to reports after November 2023 as overdose case definitions have changed.

**Drug Overdose**

NEMSIS v3: Labeled as general drug overdose if:

1. **Two or more** of the following are true:
   1. Primary impression (eSituation.11) starts with {F11, F13-F16, or F18-F19} or is one of {T40.1X4, T40.2X1, T40.691, T43.291, T43.621, T50.904, T50.991}; **OR** secondary impression (eSituation.12) contains "opioid", "stimulant", "hallucinogen", "cocaine", "sedative", "inhalant", "psychoactive", "heroin", "other drugs", or "unspecified drugs".
   2. Narrative (eNarrative.01) or chief complaint (eSituation.04) contains "overdose", "opioid", "opiod", "opiate", "opium", "fentanyl", "heroin", "herion", ""speedball, "speed ball", "spherion", "hod", "OD", "O.D.", "O/D", "OD/", or "ODED".
   3. Naloxone (or brand names) listed as Medication Administered (eMedications.03) **OR** narrative/chief complaint contains naloxone (or brand names).
2. **Any one** of the following are true:
   1. Naloxone (or brand names) listed as Medication Administered (eMedications.03) **AND** (the medication response (eMediations.07) indicates that the patient "Improved" **OR** medication response does not indicate "Unchanged" or "Worse") **AND** one of the following terms is found in the narrative or chief complaint: "white powder", "syringe", "improved loc", "improvement in loc", "positive response to Narcan".
   2. Incident meets the criteria for opioid overdose definition (see pg. 2).

**NOTE:** This syndrome is restricted to only those incidents the Patient Disposition (eDisposition.12) of "Evaluation, No Treatment", "Refused Care, Transported", "Refused Care, without Transport", "Treated Released", "Treated Released AMA", "Treated Transferred", "Treated Transported", "Treated Transported Law Enforcement", or "Treated Transported Private Vehicle" OR no patient disposition specified.

This syndrome is restricted to only those incidents with Type of Service Requested (eResponse.05) of "Emergency Response (Primary Response Area)", "Emergency Response (Intercept)", or "Emergency Response (Mutual Aid)".

**Opioid Overdose**

NEMSIS v3: Labeled as opioid overdose if any of the following are true:

1. Provider impressions (eSituation.11, eSituation.12) are any of F11, T40.1X4, T40.2X1, 977.90 (sub-codes included); **OR** secondary impression (eSituation.12) contains "opioid" or "heroin" **AND** at least one of the following are true:
   1. Naloxone (or brand names) listed as Medication Administered (eMedications.03).
   2. Narrative (eNarrative.01) contains "narcan", "naloxone", "evzio", or "kloxxado".
   3. Narrative contains one of the following unresponsive search terms: "unresponsive", "apneic", "apnea", "semi-cons", "semi cons", "uncons", "agonal".
2. Naloxone (or brand names) listed as Medication Administered **AND** Medication Response is "Improved".
3. Narrative contains "narcan", "naloxone", "evzio", or "kloxxado" **AND** a minimum of 1 term from at least 2 overdose-related symptom groups (altered mental status, ingestion, pupils, respiratory, overdose).
4. Naloxone (or brand names) listed as Medication Administered **AND** Medication Administered Prior to this Unit’s EMS Care (eMedications.02) is "Yes".

**NOTE:** This syndrome is restricted to only those incidents the Patient Disposition (eDisposition.12) of "Evaluation, No Treatment", "Refused Care, Transported", "Refused Care, without Transport", "Treated Released", "Treated Released AMA", "Treated Transferred", "Treated Transported", "Treated Transported Law Enforcement", or "Treated Transported Private Vehicle" OR no patient disposition specified.

This syndrome is restricted to only those incidents with Type of Service Requested (eResponse.05) of "Emergency Response (Primary Response Area)", "Emergency Response (Intercept)", or "Emergency Response (Mutual Aid)".

**Heroin Overdose**

NEMSIS v3: Labeled as heroin overdose if **two or more** of the following are true:

* 1. Primary impression (eSituation.11) is "Poisoning by heroin, undetermined" (T40.1X4) **OR** secondary impression contains "heroin".
  2. Narrative or chief complaint (eNarrative.01) contains "heroin", "herion", "speedball", "speed ball", "spheroin", or "hod".
  3. Naloxone (or brand names) listed as Medication Administered (eMedications.03) **OR** narrative/chief complaint (eNarrative.01) contains naloxone (or brand names).

**NOTE:** This syndrome is restricted to only those incidents the Patient Disposition (eDisposition.12) of "Evaluation, No Treatment", "Refused Care, Transported", "Refused Care, without Transport", "Treated Released", "Treated Released AMA", "Treated Transferred", "Treated Transported", "Treated Transported Law Enforcement", or "Treated Transported Private Vehicle" OR no patient disposition specified.

This syndrome is restricted to only those incidents with Type of Service Requested (eResponse.05) of "Emergency Response (Primary Response Area)", "Emergency Response (Intercept)", or "Emergency Response (Mutual Aid)".

**Fentanyl Overdose**

NEMSIS v3: Labeled as fentanyl overdose if **all of the following** are true:

* 1. Incident meets the criteria for general overdose definition (see pg. 1).
  2. Patient complaint (eSituation.04) or narrative (eNarrative.01) mention "fentanyl" or common misspellings.
  3. Fentanyl is **NOT** documented as a medication administered by EMS (eMedications.03).