

# Harm Reduction Vending Machines

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# Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that is critical to engaging with people who use drugs and equipping them with life-saving tools and information to create positive change in their lives and potentially save their lives.

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– Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Ad



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# Harm Reduction

The U.S. is experiencing the most significant substance use and overdose epidemic it has ever faced, exacerbated by the recent worldwide pandemic, and driven by the proliferation of highly potent synthetic opioids (containing fentanyl or fentanyl analogs) and animal tranquilizers (like xylazine) into many types of drugs (including stimulants and counterfeit prescription pills).

There were more than 100,000 drug-involved overdose deaths in 2023.

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# Harm Reduction

**Harm reduction services save lives** by being available and accessible in a manner that emphasizes the need for humility and compassion toward people who use drugs. Harm reduction plays a significant role in preventing drug-related deaths and increasing access to healthcare, social services, and treatment. These services decrease overdose fatalities, acute life-threatening infections related to unsterile drug injection, and chronic diseases (such as HIV and hepatitis C).

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# Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is part of a **comprehensive prevention strategy** and the continuum of care. Harm reduction approaches have **proven to prevent death, injury, disease, overdose, and substance misuse**. Harm reduction is effective in addressing the public health epidemic involving substance use as well as infectious disease and other harms associated with drug use.

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# Vending Machines

According to an article published by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health: “Harm reduction vending machines are an evidence-based strategy to provide essential harm reduction supplies to people who use drugs. Harm reduction vending machines...may be stocked with supplies such as naloxone, sterile injection equipment, condoms, sharps containers, first aid kits, and pregnancy tests. Harm reduction vending machine implementation has been associated with reductions in syringe sharing and overdose mortality...”

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# Vending Machines

During an overdose, timeliness can save a life; therefore, it is vital for community members to have consistent, community-based access to naloxone and other harm reduction supplies.

Additionally, harm reduction vending machines can also function as a way to engage community members in other health services and resources.

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# Vending Machines

In Missoula County...

- Substance Use Disorder Coalition (SUDC) committee was strategizing on other approaches, one of them being vending machines.
- Missoula Drug Safety Coalition (MDSC) was focused on overdose education and prevention
- In Lewis & Clark County, learned they installed 3 vending machines

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# Vending Machines









# DOSE OF HOPE

## Recognizing Opioid Overdose

Opioid overdose is life-threatening and requires immediate emergency attention. Recognizing the signs of opioid overdose is essential to saving lives.

Call **9-1-1 immediately** if a person exhibits **ANY** of the following symptoms:

- + They cannot be awakened or are unable to speak
- + Their body goes limp
- + Their face is extremely pale and/or feels clammy to the touch
- + Their fingernails or lips have a purple or blue color
- + They start vomiting or making gurgling noises
- + Their breathing or heartbeat slows or stops

\*SAMHSA



## About Overdose

Overdose Awareness Day  
Events

> [DOSE OF HOPE](#)

I WANT TO

[GET INVOLVED](#)

# Dose of Hope

As time moved forward, the two committees melded into one and worked together to identify where to place machines.

- Used ODMaP to identify local areas where overdoses were occurring and then sought partners that were in that physical area
- Reached out to businesses to partner together
  - Mountain Line bus transfer center, downtown
  - Missoula Food Bank & Community Center
  - Johnson Street Shelter
  - Hope Rescue Mission Drop-In Center



# Dose of Hope

What goes in machines?

- Naloxone
- Fentanyl Test Strip Kits
- *Wound care kits, Syringes, sharps containers, generic Plan B for \$5, free pregnancy tests, condoms, lube, dental dams, free pads and tampons*



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# Dose of Hope Data



**1,605 boxes of naloxone**  
**1,182 fentanyl test strip kits**

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# Dose of Hope Data

- In cases in 2025 to-date it was found that naloxone was administered in 86% of cases that were found to be likely opioid overdoses.
- At first look, it seems that Missoula County has a low naloxone administration rate – but 64% of cases were typically cases where naloxone was administered prior to EMS arrival.
- Other tracking? Nope...



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