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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Alert: New Counterfeit Opioid Overdoses Reported in Illinois

DuPage County— The State of Illinois has alerted local health departments about multiple counterfeit opioid pill-related overdoses, including two fatalities, over the past week. The overdose cases involve young people between the ages of 19-23 years, and additional cases are under investigation. The young people involved referred to the counterfeit pills as “M30,” “Percocet,” or oxycodone, which were purchased on the street.

During September 2020, the DuPage Narcan Program (DNP) data showed a sharp increase in the use of Narcan in the 19-23-year-old age group. Earlier this year, Dr. Richard Jorgensen, DuPage County Coroner, reported an increase in 2020 fatal drug overdoses and suicides in DuPage County. “We continue to see an increase in fatal drug overdoses and suicides in our most vulnerable residents. Adding to our concerns, is this new alert regarding counterfeit pills causing severe symptoms and loss of life in very young people,” said Dr. Richard Jorgensen, DuPage County Coroner. I encourage individuals to connect with friends and family who are struggling and help connect them to the various local resources available, it could help save their lives.”

Most recently, the Illinois Poison Control Center notified the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) of a probable near-overdose case. The case involved a young person who overdosed but was revived by their family with the use of Narcan (naloxone), a life-saving opioid overdose reversal medication. “It’s important to realize that we all possess the power to help save lives. If a loved one has overdosed, or even a complete stranger, knowing how to respond could mean the difference between life and death,” said Karen Ayala, DuPage County Health Department Executive Director. “If someone has overdosed on opioids, call 9-1-1 and, if available, administer Narcan.”

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The DNP serves as a vital resource in DuPage County to train individuals on the use of Narcan as well as providing supplies of Narcan to individuals who are more likely to witness an overdose. The trainings offered to the community provide an overview of the opioid epidemic in DuPage County, how to recognize and respond to an overdose, how to use the life-saving antidote Narcan, and education on community resources. To learn more about community trainings offered or to request Narcan, visit the [HOPE DuPage website](#). In addition to having naloxone available, using other harm reduction strategies to prevent overdose is an important step to reduce deaths in our communities. To learn more about harm reduction services in Illinois, visit the [Illinois Helpline website](#).

The Health Department also reminds residents of its comprehensive Behavioral Health Services programs which focus on addressing the mental health and substance use needs of individuals. Also available, is Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). This approach incorporates medication and therapy/counseling to treat substance use disorders and decrease the risk of an opioid overdose. More information is available on the [DCHD website](#).

Additional resources available, include:

The Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances. If someone you know is suffering from an opioid use disorder or other substance use disorders, call the Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances at 1-833-2FINDHELP to speak with a trained professional for support and advice or to be directed to customized resources or visit [HelplineIL.org](#).

SAMHSA's National Helpline. a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

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