

Overdose and Poisoning (Adults)

Table 3.67 – ASSESSMENT and MANAGEMENT of:

Overdose and Poisoning *continued*

ASSESSMENT	MANAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood glucose level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure blood glucose level – especially in cases of alcohol intoxication which is a common cause of hypoglycaemia (<4.0 mmol/l). Correct blood glucose level – refer to glycaemic emergencies; other relevant guidance: glucose 10% guideline and glucagon guideline – NB Glucagon is often not effective in overdoses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thermoregulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hypo- or hyperthermia can occur.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cases of self-harm assess the patient's emotional and mental state – undertake a rapid mental health assessment – refer mental disorder guideline. <p>Do not delay treatment, but if possible, document the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The patient's home environment. The patient's social and family support network. The patient's emotional state and level of distress. The events leading to the incident.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer to further care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All patients suffering an opioid overdose whether or not they have responded to naloxone – the effects of respiratory depression opioid overdose can last 4–5 hours. All patients who have suffered an intentional overdose even if the substance is found to be harmless. If the patient does not require emergency treatment, but a mental health assessment may be required, consider alternative pathways e.g. specialist mental health service – as per local protocol. NB This decision should take into account the patient's preferences, and the views of the receiving service. <p>Patients may be considered to be left at home if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The substance is verified by TOXBASE/NPIS as harmless. The incident is/was accidental. There is a responsible adult present. Advice given to seek medical advice if the patient becomes unwell. Arrangements have been made to inform the health visitor or GP. <p>In patients that refuse transfer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess mental capacity. Explain the potential consequences of not receiving treatment. If necessary seek medical advice – follow local protocol.