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Walgreens Offers Overdose-Reversing Drug, But Some Aren't Sure It's A Good Idea

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WINNETKA (CBSLA.com) – Walgreens pharmacies in 39 states including California will soon sell a drug that reverses the effects of overdoses of heroin and other opioids without

a prescription.

But some families are worried that quick access to naloxone could do more harm than good.

"My son overdosed at home, and I found him on my living room floor," said Jody Waxman.

Naloxone administered by a first-responder saved her son's life when he was addicted to heroin. The mother from Winnetka knows not everyone's as lucky.

Drug overdoses killed nearly 50,000 people in 2014, a 6.5 percent increase from the year before. But Waxman doesn't necessarily support making it easier to get the drug.

"I'm grateful it was there because my son's alive today, but it needs to be left to the professionals," she said.

It's a viewpoint shared by Dennis Poncher, founder of Because I Love You, a parental support group for families in crisis.

"It's almost giving an OK to do it," he said. He worries easy access to naloxone will enable heroin users.

"It just doesn't make sense. It's a false sense of security is what it is," Poncher said.

Walgreens says the change is about saving lives.

The company also began rolling out medication-disposal kiosks to encourage people to get rid of opioids and other controlled substances.

But Waxman, whose son is now sober, says education and treatment are what matter



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Walgreens says the changes will go into effect later this year. The new kiosks already can be found at stores in Northern California.

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