

COVID-19 Safer Drug Use

Harm Reduction Tips

DON'T SHARE YOUR SUPPLIES. Sharing stems, meth pipes, straws, and injecting supplies (including ties, swabs, filters) all increase the risk of spreading the virus and other germs. Avoid sharing cigarettes, bongs, joints and vapes too.

MINIMIZE CONTACT. If you are having sex or doing sex work, COVID-19 can be transmitted by close contact like coughing, kissing, or direct contact with bodily fluids. Try to minimize close contact and ensure condom use.

PREPARE YOUR DRUGS YOURSELF. Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and water and prepare your own drugs. Keep your surfaces clean and wipe them down before and after use with disinfectant. If you can't prepare your own drugs, stay with the person who is preparing your drug. Get them to wash their hands thoroughly, and to clean up before and after.

PLAN & PREPARE FOR OVERDOSE. COVID-19 is an upper respiratory illness, so you could be at a greater risk of overdose. Call 911 in an emergency situation. Load up on naloxone and remember to practice overdose prevention by not using alone, tasting first, doing a test hit, use smaller amounts, and go slowly. If you are using with others, make an OD plan with them and stagger use.

PREPARE FOR A DRUG SHORTAGE. You might lose access to your drug of choice in an COVID-19 outbreak. Consider alternative medications that could help take the edge off, and get medical help if needed. Have food, drinks, and other medications to make it easier if facing potential withdrawal.

STOCK UP ON SUPPLIES. Get enough syringes and injecting equipment to last you 2 to 4 weeks.

STOCK UP ON MEDICATIONS. Access to prescription medications may be limited in an outbreak. Ask your medical provider about getting a full month's supply if possible. If you take **Suboxone** or **Methadone**, ask your clinic, doctor, or nurse to make a plan to prevent disruptions to your dose. Ask about their emergency plans for patients (refills over the phone, telehealth visits, etc.).

KEEP YOUR SPACE CLEAN. Wipe down surfaces where you prepare drugs, before and after use, with disinfectant. Before and after handling drugs, wash your hands with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, including after you purchase the drugs. Wipe down drug packages.

WASH YOUR HANDS. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Wash after every time you are around other people, use public transportation, handle cash, and after getting your drugs.

Provincial Government COVID-19 Website www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/



For More Information on Naloxone visit:

<https://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/naloxonekits/>

