

## Overdose Update Toronto, March 3, 2020

The Works supervised consumption service continues to see a slight increase in overdoses following the spike in overdoses on February 26, 2020. The number of suspected opioid overdose related calls to paramedics over the weekend (February 28 to March 1) was also much higher than normal.

Samples of the drugs involved in the February 26<sup>th</sup> overdoses were found to contain caffeine, fentanyl, and flualprazolam (a benzodiazepine). Not all overdoses that the supervised consumption service at The Works continues to see are related to benzodiazepines.

Naloxone is effective for temporarily reversing the effects of overdose for all opioids, even if other drugs are involved. However, it does not work to reverse the effect of other drugs like benzodiazepines, which are not opioids. If someone is overdosing, give naloxone to reverse the effects of any opioids contributing to the overdose and call 911.

### Advice for people using drugs

- Try not to use drugs alone. Use a supervised consumption service if possible. In an overdose situation, give naloxone, call 911 and stay with the person until help arrives.
- For a list of supervised consumption services in Toronto, see <https://bit.ly/2VzVRYd>.
- Check your drugs at drug checking services, which are available at The Works, South Riverdale Community Health Centre and Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (Queen West site).
- Use with someone else and take turns spotting for each other. If you must use alone, have someone check on you.
- Do a small test dose first.
- Get naloxone. Agencies that have it include: The Works, Parkdale-Queen West CHC, Regent Park CHC, South Riverdale CHC, Fred Victor, Eva's Satellite, Sistering, Sherbourne Health Centre, Seaton House, Agincourt Community Services Association, LAMP Community Health Centre, 129 Peter Street, and Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities at 2660 Eglinton Avenue East.
- You can also get a free naloxone kit at a pharmacy. Find out where at: [www.ontario.ca/page/get-naloxone-kits-free](http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-naloxone-kits-free) or by calling 1-800-565-8603.

**In an overdose situation, get help immediate:  
Call 911. Give naloxone. Stay with the person.  
It is essential that all overdoses get medical attention.**

In an overdose situation, the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act* provides legal protection from drug-related charges for carrying drugs for personal use and other simple possession offences.

