

## High Number of Overdose Events at Some Downtown East Supervised Consumption Services

September 5, 2021

There has been a recent substantial increase in overdoses at some downtown east supervised consumption services. Highly potent drugs are in circulation. So far, there is no consistent description of the drugs causing the overdoses other than potency.

[Toronto's drug checking service](#) has found that recent fentanyl samples associated with overdoses have contained all three of the following benzodiazepine drugs: etizolam, flualprazolam, and flubromazepam. Nitazene opioids continue to be present in larger numbers of fentanyl samples. These drugs are considered to be up to 20 times stronger than fentanyl.

### **Overdose response and prevention advice for people using drugs:**

- **Try not to use alone.** A buddy system is safer than using alone.
- **Use a supervised consumption service, if possible. The Works is open on Sundays from 11 am - 5pm and Monday - Saturday from 10 am - 10 pm.** For locations and hours of other sites visit: [toronto.ca/ConsumptionServices](https://toronto.ca/ConsumptionServices).
- **If you must use alone, have a safety plan.** Get someone to check on you either by phone or in person. Before you use alone, call the National Overdose Response Service at **1-888-688-NORS (6677)**. You can connect to community members via the [Brave app](#).
- **Vet your supply.** Ask others about what they are experiencing with the same drug or batch.
- **Check what's in your drugs at local drug checking services.** The Works, South Riverdale Community Health Centre (KeepSIX and Moss Park) and Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (Queen West and Parkdale sites) can check for you.
- **Get naloxone.** Kits are available at 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, John Howard Society (3313 Lakeshore Blvd West), LAMP CHC, Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities 2660 Eglinton Avenue East), and other agencies. Free naloxone kits are available at some pharmacies. Visit [www.ontario.ca/page/get-naloxone-kits-free](https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-naloxone-kits-free) or call 1-800-565-8603.

**If someone looks like they are overdosing on opioids, give naloxone and call 911.**

Wear a face covering and gloves. Keep a 6 foot distance from the person whenever you are not providing direct care to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

See overdose response tips in the [5-Step Response](#) poster.



# 5 STEP OVERDOSE RESPONSE

STEP **1**  **SHOUT & SHAKE**  
their name      their shoulders

STEP **2**  **CALL 911**  
if unresponsive

STEP **3**  **ADMINISTER NALOXONE**  
1 spray into a nostril and/or 1 ampule into arm or leg

STEP **4**  **START CPR**  
Do CHEST COMPRESSIONS ONLY  
during COVID19 – NO rescue breathing

STEP **5**  **IS IT WORKING?**  
If NO improvement in 2–3 minutes  
repeat steps 3 & 4

## STAY WITH THE PERSON

Clean your hands after providing care.