

Recent Increase in Drug-Related Deaths in Toronto

January 24, 2023

Why are we sending this alert?

- Over the last few days, there has been an **increase in the number of fatal suspected opioid overdose calls** attended by Toronto Paramedics Services.
- Preliminary data shows that from **January 19-22, 2023** there were **9 suspected opioid overdose-related deaths**, including:
 - **3 deaths on Saturday, January 21st, 2023**
 - **4 deaths on Sunday, January 22nd, 2023**

Additional Information

- [Toronto's Drug Checking Service](#) continues to find highly potent opioids and benzodiazepine-related drugs in samples expected to be fentanyl.
- While specific details are not known, there appears to be a range of drugs involved in this increase in overdose fatalities.

Note

- Toronto Public Health monitors non-fatal and fatal overdose calls. The increase in the number of fatal suspected opioid overdose calls triggered alert thresholds.
- Overdoses are occurring in a variety of neighbourhoods across the city.

Messages for people using drugs in Toronto:

- **Try not to use alone.** Buddy up with someone who you trust. Have a drug use safety plan and keep naloxone on-hand.
- **Use a supervised consumption service, if possible.** For locations and hours of sites please visit: toronto.ca/ConsumptionServices.
- **If you must use alone, have a safety plan.**
 - Get someone to check on you either by phone or in person.
 - Call the National Overdose Response Service at **1-888-688-NORS (6677)** to get support while using alone.
 - Connect to community members virtually 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.** Your drugs might have unexpected substances in them. Have them checked at one of the drug checking service locations in [Toronto](#).
- **Get naloxone.** Kits are available at Toronto Public Health, The Works, and through many [partner organizations](#). Free naloxone kits are also available at some pharmacies. Visit www.ontario.ca/page/get-naloxone-kits-free or call 1-800-565-8603

5 STEP OVERDOSE RESPONSE

STEP

1



SHOUT & SHAKE

their name

their shoulders

STEP

2

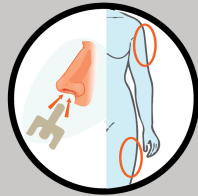


CALL 911

if unresponsive

STEP

3



ADMINISTER NALOXONE

1 spray into a nostril and/or 1 ampule into arm or leg

STEP

4



START CPR

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