

# Drug Alert: Increase in Drug-Related Deaths & Inhalation Related Overdoses

July 04, 2023

## Why are we sending this alert?

- There was an **increase in suspected opioid overdose-related deaths** attended by Toronto Paramedics Services between June 28 and July 1, 2023.
  - During this period, preliminary data shows that there were **7 suspected opioid overdose-related deaths**, which is double the current average for a four-day period.
- There was also a **high number of overdoses related to smoking drugs observed outside The Works** on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

## Additional Information

- [Toronto's Drug Checking Service](#) continues to find other highly potent opioids and benzodiazepine-related drugs in samples expected to be fentanyl.
- While specifics are not known, there appears to be a range of drugs involved in this increase in overdose fatalities.
- Overdoses are occurring in a variety of neighbourhoods across the city.

## Note

- Toronto Public Health monitors non-fatal and fatal overdose calls attended by Toronto Paramedics Services. The increase in the number of fatal suspected opioid overdose calls triggered alert thresholds.

## 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](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.
  - 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](https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-naloxone-kits-free) or call 1-800-565-8603

# Smoke Drugs?

## You can still OD.

And it can happen fast.

- **Know what you're smoking** – get your drugs checked before using.
- **Pace yourself** – take breaks as you go.
- **Buddy up** – use with someone you trust who can help if you go down.
- **Keep naloxone** close at hand.
- **Call NORS** – a free, anonymous phone call for real-time, life-saving support!

**1-888-688-NORS (6677)**

