

Drug Alert Update: High Number of Drug-Related Deaths in Toronto

September 07, 2023

Why are we sending this alert?

- Toronto Paramedics Services continue to attend a **higher than usual number of suspected opioid overdose-related deaths**.
 - Between August 31-September 06, 2023, preliminary data shows that there were **11 suspected opioid overdose-related deaths**, which is double the current weekly average.
- This update follows a previous alert issued by Toronto Public Health on [August 23, 2023](#), about increases in suspected opioid overdose-related deaths and this trend is continuing.

Additional Information

- There have been recent reports of **red and green fentanyl linked to overdoses** in the community and at supervised consumption sites, however specific information about these drugs is not available.
- [Toronto's Drug Checking Service](#) continues to find other highly potent opioids and benzodiazepine-related drugs in samples expected to be fentanyl.
- Overdoses are occurring in a variety of neighbourhoods across the city.

Note

- Toronto Public Health monitors 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.
- **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 \(6677\)](tel:1-888-688-NORS) 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

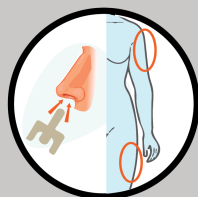


CALL 911

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