

Harm Reduction Tips

to reduce your risk of respiratory viruses



Clean your hands

Clean hands frequently with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Do this right before you prep your drugs and after any contact with others, using the TTC, handling cash, and getting your drugs. Dry your hands well with a paper towel or a clean cloth towel.



Don't share gear

Sharing stems, meth pipes, straws, and injecting supplies (including ties, swabs, filters) all increase the risk of spreading viruses and other germs. Avoid sharing cigarettes, bongos, joints and vapes too.



Prep your own drugs

Try not to let others handle your drugs or drug-use supplies and try not to handle theirs. Before you prep, wash your hands and use alcohol swabs or a household cleaning product to clean the surface you are using. If you have someone else prep your drugs, make sure they wash their hands or use alcohol based hand sanitizer. Visit a supervised consumption site to learn how to prep your own drugs.



Get extra harm reduction supplies and naloxone

Next time you are at a harm reduction agency ask for extra supplies. Stocking up will prepare you if you get sick and cannot get out for gear.



Avoid putting drug baggies/wraps in your mouth, anus or vagina

If you have to carry drugs inside your body, clean the bag/wrap thoroughly with alcohol-based sanitizer, alcohol swabs or isopropyl alcohol solution prior to inserting and after you take it out. Use an alcohol-based mouthwash to clean your mouth if that's how you carry. If your dealer carries in their mouth, ask them to consider a different method.



Work with your Methadone/Suboxone/OAT Prescriber

Connect with a prescriber to access Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) or safer supply. Make a plan with your prescriber to access your medication if you get sick. Some options are: telephone or virtual appointments, carries and medication delivery.



Prepare for unplanned withdrawal

Plan ahead! Alcohol and Benzodiazepine withdrawal can be dangerous – team up with someone you trust who will support you to get medical care if you go into withdrawal. Dealers get sick too. Have a back-up plan in case your dealer is unavailable.



Respond to overdose

Any time you have to give naloxone or respond to a medical emergency, use the gloves provided in your naloxone kit. Always safely dispose of used kits contents directly into the trash after use and clean your hands, and use a sharps bin to safely dispose of the used injectable kit contents.