

Substance Use Tips to Reduce Risk of COVID-19 Transmission

With Ontario's commitment to "flatten out the curve" of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is always good to be prepared. Continue to follow the lead of Timiskaming Health Unit for infection control and stay up-to-date with information: [Ministry of Health](#), [Public Health Ontario](#), [Health Canada](#). Please find below a few recommendations from the Ontario Harm Reduction Distribution Program (OHRDP).

Key Harm Reduction Tips to Share with Clients

- Don't share or reuse harm reduction supplies or cigarettes.
- Cook your drugs, every time.
- Dispose of used harm reduction supplies into sharps containers.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, making sure you clean your thumbs, between your fingers, and the backs of your hands. Use hand sanitizer if your hands are not covered with dirt. Use tissues to sneeze or cough into and then dispose into the garbage. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into the bend of your elbow. Wash your hands with soap and water (if available) immediately afterwards.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- If you are on opioid agonist therapy, talk to your pharmacist/doctor about carries.
- Try to minimize close contact with other people (social distancing) which means standing or sitting at least 6 feet apart from other people.
- Avoid crowds.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before you prepare your drugs and clean the surface area where you are preparing your drugs.
- If you use alone, test your dope first by using less to lower your chances of an overdose. Ask a friend to check in on you, or have a friend on the phone while you are using. You can also call the **Overdose Prevention Line at 1-888-853-8542** and someone will remain on the phone with you while you use; if you overdose they will call 911.
- Always have Narcan® (naloxone).
- When receiving drugs, immediately wipe down packaging with disinfecting wipes, alcohol, or bleach.
- If smoking, give distance from others and increase ventilation and access to fresh air if possible.
- Don't let others handle your drugs or supplies. If they do, make sure you and they wash your hands before and after handling.

Source: Ontario Harm Reduction Distribution Program (OHRDP), Vancouver Coastal Health