

Tips for Safe Substance Use During COVID-19



Clean your hands

Clean hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Do this right before you prep your drugs and after any contact with others, using public transit, handling cash, and getting your drugs. Dry your hands well with 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 the virus and other germs. Avoid sharing cigarettes, bongs, joints and vapes too.



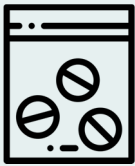
Prep your own drugs

Try not to let others handle your drugs or drug-use supplies and don't let them handle yours. 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 to have someone else prep your drugs, make sure they wash their hands or use alcohol based hand sanitizer.



Get extra harm reduction supplies and naloxone

Next time you are at a harm reduction agency, ask for extra supplies. Stocking up for 2 weeks will help to limit your contact with others.



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

If you are on opioid agonist treatment or prescribed opioids for safer supply reasons, ask your healthcare provider to extend your prescription and reduce the frequency of your in-person appointments. Ask them for telephone or video-chat appointments, or to help you get doses delivered to you if possible.



Prepare for unplanned withdrawal

Have a back-up plan in case your dealer gets sick. Ask your healthcare provider to help with getting on OAT or getting the medications you might need for opioid withdrawal. Benzodiazepine and alcohol withdrawal can be very dangerous—team up with someone you trust who will be able to get you medical care if you go into withdrawal.



Respond to overdose

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

If you ever have difficulty breathing or experience other severe symptoms, call 911.

www.timiskaminghu.com

(Adapted from Toronto Public Health)



Services de santé du
TIMISKAMING
Health Unit