

OVERDOSE ALERT:

Illicit Benzodiazepines or “Benzos” contaminating street drugs

- Benzodiazepines, or benzos, are a type of medication that "depresses" or slows down your brain activity.
- Benzos can affect the way you think, feel, and move. When benzos are mixed with opioids (down) there is a **higher** risk of overdose.
- Individuals who have overdosed using drugs contaminated with benzos may be difficult to rouse and slow to respond to naloxone.

If you suspect someone is experiencing a benzos-related overdose, it is very important to:

- **Call 9-1-1 for help.**
- **Continue giving rescue breaths.** Even though naloxone may not work, you can still help keep them alive and get oxygen to their brain by providing rescue breaths every five seconds.
- **Continue administering naloxone.** While naloxone usually helps a person that has overdosed regain consciousness very quickly, this may not be the case for someone experiencing a benzos-related overdose. Keep giving naloxone – it will still work on any opioids that could be in the person's system.
- **Stay with them until emergency services arrive.** Do not leave someone who is unconscious alone. Stay with them and deliver rescue breaths until emergency services arrive.
- **Be aware that they could be groggy or experience memory loss.** If the person regains consciousness, they may still be disoriented and require you to stay with them.

The Provincial Overdose Alert remains in effect due to the increases in both fatal and non-fatal overdoses. See [Toward the Heart](#) for more information.

Remember:

- Avoid using substances alone. Use in the presence of others who are trained to respond with a Take Home Naloxone Kit.
- Keep more than one naloxone kit with you. Some overdoses require more than three doses of naloxone.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner about how to access prescription medications to reduce overdose risk and prevent withdrawal. Or call the Northern Health COVID-19 Online Clinic and Information Line at 1-844-645-7811.