



OPIOID FACTSHEET FOR STUDENTS

During your teen and young adult years, you will be exposed to alcohol and other drugs. Deciding to use these substances is a personal choice. But like any personal choice, you can make an informed decision. If you choose to use alcohol or other drugs, inform yourself of the risks and consequences of using them.

The issue

Across Canada, including Ottawa, there has been an increase in overdoses and overdose deaths related to opioids. Ottawa Public Health is alerting local schools of the increase risk due to **illicit non-prescription opioids** (a.k.a. counterfeit, illegal, bootleg opioids). Recently, it has been discovered that a highly toxic and dangerous opioid drug known as Fentanyl has turned up in our area. Prescription Fentanyl, in a patch or liquid form, is prescribed to treat severe pain such as cancer. Non-prescription Fentanyl can be in the form of a powder, in a pressed pill or mixed with other drugs.

Why are we concerned about illicit non-prescription Fentanyl?

- It is 50 to 100 times more toxic than the basic opioid, morphine.
- It has caused hundreds of deaths in both Alberta and British Columbia. There have already been deaths here in Ontario this year.
- It is being made on the street and there is little to no quality control.
- It only takes an extremely small amount of the powder form to kill someone (as little as the equivalent of 2 grains of salt).
- It is in counterfeit pills that look identical to prescription opioids (Oxycontin, Percocet).
- You can't see it, smell it or taste it.
- It is being added to other drugs like cocaine, speed and ecstasy/MDMA.
- All opioids can cause an overdose.

Illicit non-prescription Fentanyl is known as:

- Faded 80s
- A215s
- Greenies
- K22s
- Fake Oxys
- Green Beanies

There may be other names we do not know about.

If you choose to use, reduce your risk by;

1. Be aware!

Only you should be making the choice of what you do or don't put into your body. Never take anything if you are not 100% sure what it is or where it has come from.

2. Do your research!

You need to know and understand what you are putting into your body. Can you answer the following questions with certainty: What is the substance? How was it made? Has it been altered? What should the substance do to you? What are the side effects of taking the substance? What will you do if your experience is not what you expected?

3. Prevent an overdose from happening!

If you are choosing to use, following these tips will help to prevent an overdose:

- **Never use alone** (if you end up in trouble, there will be no one to help you)
- **Never mix drugs** (especially pain medication and alcohol or with anti-anxiety medication)
- **Go slow** if you are using a new substance, always take a small test dose first to see how it is going to affect you
- **Carry Naloxone** – it is a medication that can reverse an overdose for a few minutes. Take-Home Naloxone kits are free in Ontario from participating pharmacies.

4. Know the Signs of an Overdose!

People having an overdose from pain medications such as Fentanyl will have one or more of the following signs:

- The person is unresponsive, or doesn't wake up easily
- Their lips and fingernails turn blue
- Their skin is cold and clammy
- Their body is limp
- They may be breathing very slowly or not at all
- They may be snoring or gurgling
- They may throw up

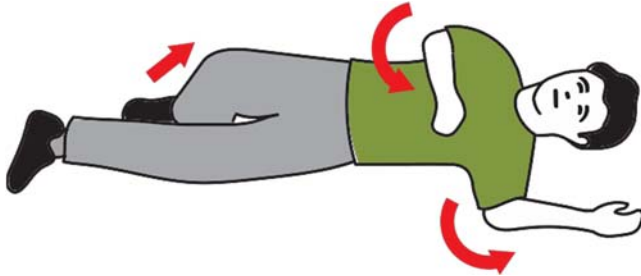
5. Know what to do if someone is in trouble!

- **CALL 911** (always make the call if you suspect that someone is in trouble)
- Get trained in first aid and CPR
- Know how to put someone in the recovery position and when to use the recovery position

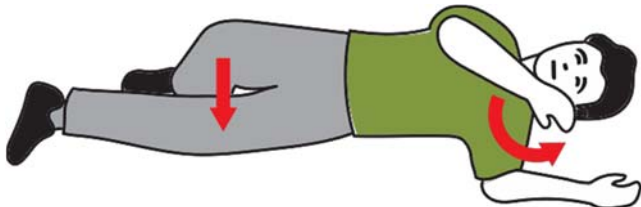


How do I put someone in the recovery position?

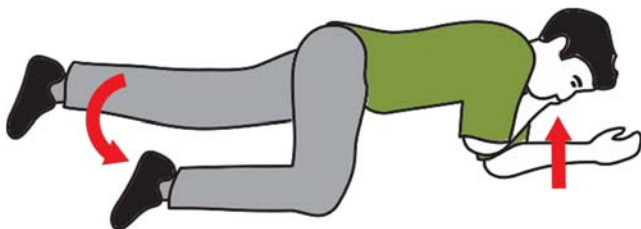
Step 1: Put the person's arm that is closest to you above their head, cross the other arm over their chest, and raise the furthest knee at an almost 90 degree angle.



Step 2: Grab the person's furthest leg and arm. Move them towards you (the person should roll towards you).



Step 3: Put the person in a comfortable position that supports their head. Stay with the person until help arrives.



For more information go to www.stopoverdoseottawa.ca

Adapted with permission from Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit and Eastern Ontario Health Unit

