

March 24, 2022

OPIOID/DRUG SAFETY UPDATE

The Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use and The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction recently released a bulletin about nitazenes, which are potent synthetic opioids estimated to be several times more potent than fentanyl. The presence and frequency of nitazenes in the unregulated drug supply is increasing.

Nitazenes are being found through samples checked by [Toronto Drug Checking Services](#). Nitazenes cannot be detected using fentanyl testing strips. Nitazenes can increase the risk of unintentional overdose, especially when combined with other substances such as other opioids or benzodiazepines. Please see the [bulletin](#) and exercise extreme caution when using substances as nitazenes may also be present in York Region.

Remember:

- Nitazenes may make overdoses more difficult to reverse. **Call 911 when responding to any overdose situation**
- **Carry naloxone.** Additional doses of naloxone may be needed to reverse an overdose as potent opioids are being found in the unregulated drug supply. Call 1-877-464-9675 X 76683 or email substance@york.ca to get naloxone kit(s)
- **A buddy system is safer than using alone.** Use substances with someone else and take turns spotting for one another
 - If possible, stay six feet from your buddy if you're not from the same household to reduce COVID-19 transmission
 - If you're alone, consider reaching out to the **National Overdose Response Service** (1-888-688-6677). This service will support you over the phone and call 911 if needed
- Before using, **ask others about what they are experiencing** with the same drug or batch

If you are feeling depressed, lonely, anxious, scared, angry, or have other mental distress, call **310-COPE** at

1-855-310-2673 or (TTY)
1-866-323-7785.

Report a bad reaction to drugs or overdose concerns
to [York.ca/ReportBadDrugs](https://www.york.ca/ReportBadDrugs).

PUBLIC HEALTH
[york.ca/opioids](https://www.york.ca/opioids)

20-5143



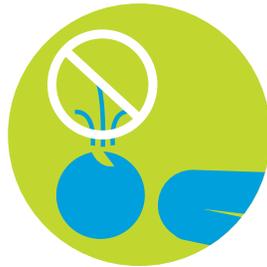
York Region

TWO STEPS TO HELP
SAVE A LIFE
OPIOID OVERDOSE
DURING COVID-19

STEP 1:
Look for signs of an **OVERDOSE**



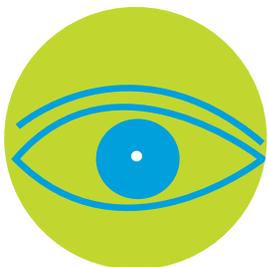
Not moving and
can't be woken



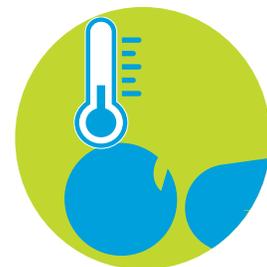
Slow or not
breathing



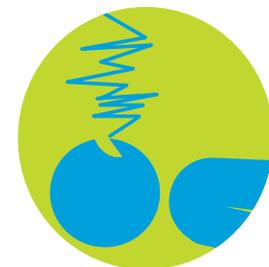
Blue or purple lips
and nails



Tiny pupils



Cold or clammy skin



Choking, gurgling
sounds or snoring

Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction

Visit: york.ca/opioids or

Call: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76683

TTY: 1-866-512-6228

Email: substance@york.ca


York Region

STEP 2:

Follow these steps when giving NALOXONE



Tap and shout



Call 911



Give naloxone: 1 nasal spray*
or injection into arm or leg



Chest compressions**



Is it working?
YES



NO improvement? Give naloxone
again, continue chest compressions
and check in 2 - 3 minutes



**PUT PERSON IN
RECOVERY POSITION (LEFT SIDE)**

IF: they begin breathing on their own or
if you have to leave them alone.

***GIVING NASAL NALOXONE DURING COVID-19 DOES NOT PRODUCE AEROSOLS.
**AT THIS TIME WE DO NOT RECOMMEND GIVING RESCUE BREATHS. PERFORMING CHEST
COMPRESSIONS DURING CPR IS NOT DANGEROUS.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

York Region Public Health Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction program:

substance@york.ca or 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76683

Report Bad Drugs: york.ca/reportbaddrugs

Connex Ontario: connexontario.ca or 1-866-531-2600