

# HARM REDUCTION



02\18\2025



# WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?

Harm reduction is a practical and compassionate approach to health and well-being that recognizes the realities of life. Instead of judgment or punishment, harm reduction focuses on minimizing risks and supporting individuals to make safer choices that work for them.

It's about meeting people where they are, without requiring them to change who they are.

## Examples of Harm Reduction in Action:

- **Naloxone Distribution:** Carrying and knowing how to use naloxone (Narcan) can reverse opioid overdoses and save lives.
- **Safe Use Supplies:** Access to sterile syringes and safe use kits prevents the spread of diseases like HIV and hepatitis.
- **Safe Consumption Spaces:** Supervised sites provide a safe, non-judgmental environment for substance use, reducing the risk of overdose.
- **Safer Sex Practices:** Condoms, PrEP, and STI testing help reduce the risks of sexually transmitted infections.
- **Mental Health Support:** Harm reduction also extends to emotional and mental well-being, offering non-coercive, person-centered care.

By focusing on safety and dignity, harm reduction helps create stronger, healthier communities where everyone has access to support, regardless of their circumstances.





# IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN DEALING WITH A PERSON WHO USES SUBSTANCES

## 5 KEY REMINDERS WHEN SUPPORTING A PERSON WHO USES SUBSTANCES:

1. **STAY CALM AND OPEN-MINDED - APPROACH CONVERSATIONS WITHOUT JUDGMENT. CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR HONESTY CAN HELP BUILD TRUST.**
2. **EDUCATE YOURSELF & SET BOUNDARIES - LEARN ABOUT THE SUBSTANCES INVOLVED AND SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS WITH CONSEQUENCES TO PROVIDE STRUCTURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY.**
3. **LISTEN & OFFER SUPPORT - ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE AND SEEK PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE IF NEEDED. SUPPORT WITHOUT ENABLING.**
4. **TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF - SUPPORTING A LOVED ONE CAN BE EMOTIONALLY DRAINING. PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE AND SEEK SUPPORT FROM TRUSTED FRIENDS OR GROUPS.**
5. **BE PATIENT & FOCUS ON PROGRESS - CHANGE TAKES TIME. CELEBRATE SMALL STEPS FORWARD AND STAY INFORMED ABOUT RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP.**

#ENDSTIGMA



# DRUG CHECKING SERVICES



**Drug checking services help individuals test substances for harmful contaminants or unexpected potency, reducing risks and promoting informed choices.**

## **How It Works:**

- **Reagent Testing:** Uses chemicals to identify certain substances through color changes.
- **Test Strips:** Simple and portable strips, like fentanyl test strips, detect the presence of specific contaminants in a substance.
- **Advanced Testing:** Lab-grade tools like spectrometry provide detailed results.

## **Why It Matters:**

- Detects contaminants like fentanyl or dangerous additives.
- Helps avoid overdose by identifying substance potency.
- Fosters care and reduces stigma.



## **Where to Access:**

- Community harm reduction organizations and some festivals offer free or low-cost testing.
- Personal testing kits are available but may be less accurate.

**Drug checking services save lives and encourage broader conversations about health, support, and systemic change.**



# QATHET CARE CUPBOARDS

SAFE USE SUPPLIES

WISHING WELL - 6251 YEW ST

CRANBERRY HALL - 6928  
CRANBERRY ST

TLA AMIN FIRE HALL - 5027  
RIVER RD

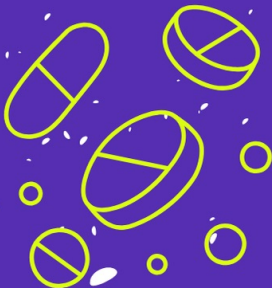
PAJLMET - 5160 HWY 101

LUND STOCKPILE STORE -  
1436 HWY 101 LUND

TEXADA MEDICAL CLINIC -  
2603 SANDERSON RD  
GILLIES BAY

TEXADA FOOD BANK - 2099  
LEGION RD VAN ANDA

#ENDSTIGMA





## WHAT TO DO BEFORE ADMINISTERING NALOXONE

CHECK TO SEE IF THEY ARE RESPONSIVE  
IF THEY AREN'T RESPONSIVE CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.

BEGIN PREPARING NALOXONE,  
FILL NEEDLE WITH ONE DOSE OF NALOXONE AND  
ADMINISTER TO THE LEG - REPEAT AS NEEDED.

## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER ADMINISTERING NALOXONE

PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DEPENDANCE  
ON OPIOIDS MAY HAVE WITHDRAWAL  
SYMPTOMS WITHIN MINUTES AFTER  
NALOXONE HAS BEEN ADMINISTERED.  
WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS MIGHT  
INCLUDE HEADACHES, CHANGES IN  
BLOOD PRESSURE, RAPID HEARTRATE,  
SWEATING, NAUSEA, VOMITING, AND  
TREMORS. WHILE THIS IS  
UNCOMFORTABLE, IT IS USUALLY NOT  
LIFE THREATENING

**IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS EXPERIENCED AN  
OVERDOSE, ALWAYS ENCOURAGE THEM TO GO  
TO THE HOSPITAL, NALOXONE CAN WEAR OFF  
AND A REACCURING OVERDOSE IS POSSIBLE**

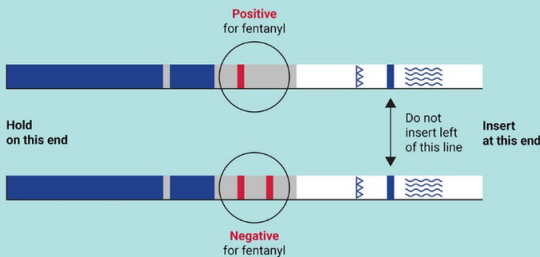
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# FENTANYL TEST STRIPS (FTS)

Fentanyl test strips are important because they help detect the presence of fentanyl in drugs, reducing the risk of overdose. Since fentanyl is highly potent and often mixed into other substances without the user's knowledge. Using test strips can provide a crucial warning and allow individuals to take harm reduction measures, such as avoiding use or using less.



## Fentanyl test strips



1. Put a small amount (at least 10mg) of your drugs aside in a clean, dry container.
2. Add water to the container and mix. For most drugs, you need  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of water. If you are testing methamphetamines, MDMA, or ecstasy, use 1 full teaspoon for every 10 mg of crystal or powder you are testing.
3. Place the wavy end of the test strip down in the water and let it absorb for about 15 seconds.
4. Take the strip out of the water and place it on a flat surface for 2 to 5 minutes.
5. Read results.

#SAFEUSE





# WHAT ARE BENZODIAZEPINES?

(BENZOS) BENZODIAZEPINES ARE A CLASS OF PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS DEVELOPED TO TREAT SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY, INSOMNIA OR SEIZURES. THE RISK FOR ABUSE AND DEPENDENCY ARE HIGHER THAN MOST OTHER MEDICATIONS. EVEN WITH A PERSON PRESCRIBED FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. IF A PERSON TRIES TO STOP SUDDENLY THEY WILL GO THROUGH WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS.

## WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

- SLEEP DISTURBANCES
- ANXIETY • INCREASED TENSION
- PANIC ATTACKS • EXCESSIVE SWEATING
- CRAVINGS • HEART PALPITATIONS
- HEADACHES • HAND TREMORS
- STIFF MUSCLES

## LESS COMMON SYMPTOMS (SEVERE ADDICTION) •

HALLUCINATIONS • SEIZURES PSYCHOSIS OR PSYCHOTIC REACTIONS • INCREASED RISK OF SUICIDAL IDEATION



# ANTEROGRADE AMNESIA

ANTEROGRADE AMNESIA IS A CONDITION THAT IMPAIRS SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM MEMORY CREATION, CAUSING A COMPLETE INABILITY TO RECALL EVENTS THAT OCCURRED DURING INTOXICATION. WHEN A PERSON IS IN A BLACKOUT, THEY ARE TEMPORARILY UNABLE TO FORM NEW MEMORIES WHILE RELATIVELY MAINTAINING OTHER SKILLS SUCH AS: HAVING A CONVERSATION, EATING, HAVING SEX OR EVEN DRIVING.

EPISODES OF AMNESIA CAN RANGE FROM SECONDS, MINUTES, AND HOURS TO DAYS. THE TIME OF ONSET AND DURATION DEPENDS ON THE DOSE AND ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION. WHEN BENZOS CAUSE ANTEROGRADE AMNESIA IT CAN LEAD TO EITHER PARTIAL (FRAGMENTARY) BLACKOUTS OR COMPLETE (EN-BLOC) BLACKOUTS. IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY ANTEROGRADE AMNESIA BECAUSE THE PERSON EXPERIENCING IT IS OFTEN AWAKE AND ENGAGING IN REGULAR BEHAVIOR. THE USER MAY ALSO ENGAGE IN RISKY BEHAVIOR





## PARTIAL (FRAGMENTARY) BLACKOUTS

Are characterized by someone having the ability to recall certain events from intoxication and yet being unaware that other memories are missing until they are reminded of the missing “gaps”. A blockage in memory formation prevents the transfer of short-term memory to long-term storage, resulting in only recalling portions of the event.

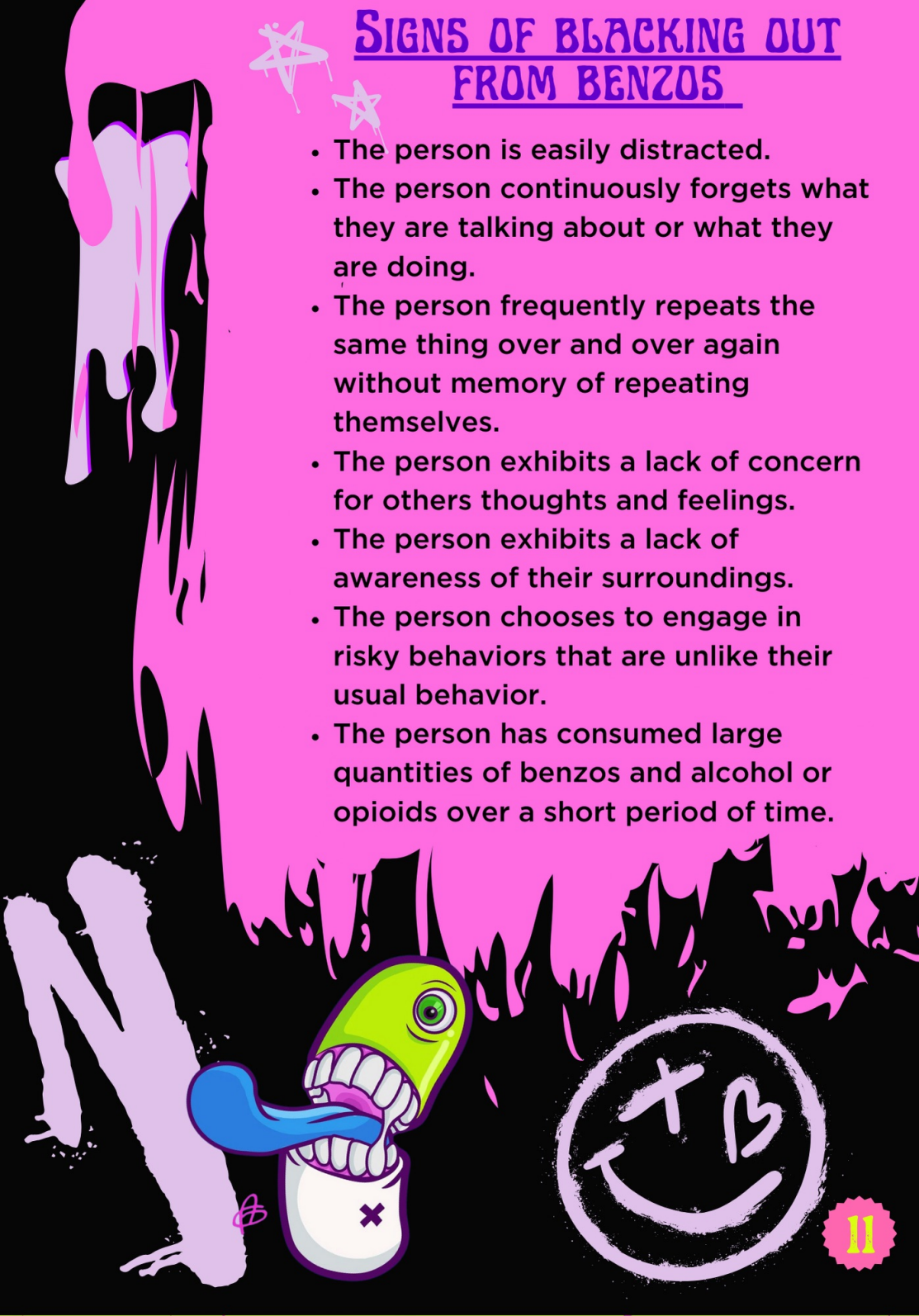


## COMPLETE (EN-BLOC) BLACKOUTS

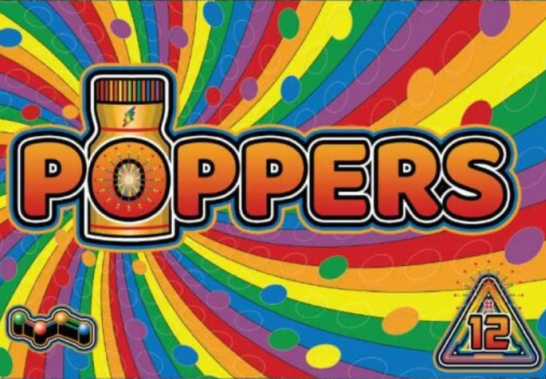
Are classified by the inability to recall any memories from intoxication, even when given cues. Once the brain can produce and store memories, a person may “wake up” from this state of amnesia and resume normal activity but most fall asleep before the end of the blackout.

# SIGNS OF BLACKING OUT FROM BENZOS

- The person is easily distracted.
- The person continuously forgets what they are talking about or what they are doing.
- The person frequently repeats the same thing over and over again without memory of repeating themselves.
- The person exhibits a lack of concern for others thoughts and feelings.
- The person exhibits a lack of awareness of their surroundings.
- The person chooses to engage in risky behaviors that are unlike their usual behavior.
- The person has consumed large quantities of benzos and alcohol or opioids over a short period of time.









CREATED BY THE CORE YOUTH SPRING  
2025



GETYOURDRUGSCHECKED.COM  
(VANCOUVER)



CRC DRUG CHECKING SERVICES  
(QATHET)

