

SIGNS OF OVERDOSE

FOR HEROIN...

Feels like:

- can't stay awake
- no energy or strength
- can't walk or talk

Looks like:

- slow or no pulse
- slow or no breathing
- skin is pale and blue and feels cold
- body is limp and can't wake up or talk
- pupils are pinned or eyes are rolled back
- vomiting

FOR CRACK/METH...

Feels like:

- heart is pumping fast
- short of breath
- hot, sweaty and shaky
- chest pain
- nausea
- faintness

Looks like:

- fast or no pulse
- fast or no breathing
- hot and sweaty skin
- confusion, anxiety
- unconscious
- vomiting
- seizures

IF SOMEONE ODS...

It is important to recognize the early symptoms of an overdose and seek medical assistance.

- Try to walk the person around, keep them awake
- Roll the person on their side (if unconscious)
- Call out for help—do not leave the person
- Call (or get someone else to call) 911
- Tell paramedics as much as you can

SAFER INJECTING PRODUCTS

Contact the health unit in your community for information about obtaining needles, filters, sterile water, alcohol swabs, acidifiers and cookers. Visit HealthLink BC for locations, www.healthlinkbc.ca.

GETTING HELP

Self-help tools:

www.heretohelp.bc.ca
www.carbc.ca

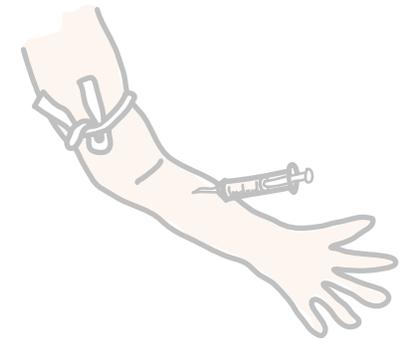
Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service:

1-800-663-1441 (BC)
604-660-9382 (Greater Vancouver)



SAFER INJECTING

HEROIN, CRACK AND CRYSTAL METH



**REDUCE YOUR RISK
OF INFECTIONS,
DISEASE AND OVERDOSE**



© 2012 Here to Help

Here to Help is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information. This brochure was developed by the Centre for Addictions Research of BC, a member of the BC Partners.

YOU AND SAFER INJECTING

Injecting is the riskiest way to use drugs. Some of the risks are related to using needles. Other risks are related to the type of drugs that go in the needles. Here are things you can do to reduce those risks.

BEFORE YOU START...

Know your dealer It's best to choose someone you feel safe with and who knows about the drugs they sell.

Find a buddy Using alone means no one will be there to help you if you overdose.

Find a safe, quiet place Being relaxed and not in a hurry can make injecting easier and therefore safer.

Clean your hands and the injection site

Use soap and water to wash your hands and wipe the injection site with an alcohol swab. This will help prevent germs from going into your blood.



- Your neck is the riskiest place to inject.
- Rotating your injection site can reduce your risk of infection.
- Abscesses can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject.

IF YOU'RE CRUSHING AND ADDING WATER TO A DRUG...

Use a sterile, disposable cooker (spoon) to mix and heat the drug Avoid re-using and sharing cookers since this can lead to contamination and infection.

Use as small an amount as possible of acidic solution It's best to use vitamin C packs. Avoid lemon juice and vinegar because they damage veins.

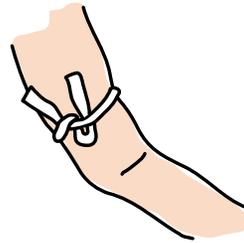


Use a clean capped needle for mixing and dissolving Uncapped needle tips can be damaged if used for mixing.

Use sterile water, if possible Or boil tap water for five minutes and then let it cool.

WHEN INJECTING...

Plump up the vein with a warm compress Heat makes it easier to see and use a vein.



Use a tie that you can undo quickly and easily Use a non-latex tourniquet or tie two condoms together and do not share it. Pump up the vein by opening and closing a fist.

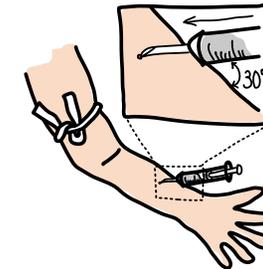


Use a clean filter Dental cotton is best. Avoid using cigarette filters. Use one filter per needle and don't share it with others.

Use a new sterile needle each time Used needles may be dull, making them hard and painful to use. Avoid infection and disease by not sharing needles.

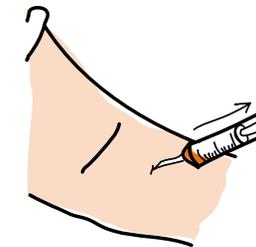
Start with a small amount if you're not sure how strong it is This can help reduce your risk of overdose.

Start with veins closest to the wrist and work your way up This way, if the bottom part of the vein collapses, you can still use the upper part.



Insert needle with bevel (hole) pointing up This helps with flow and reduces risk of vein damage.

Aim in the direction of blood flow Go towards the heart.



Flag the needle Push plunger in a little and then pull back until you see blood in needle. This way you know your needle is in right.

Release tie and inject slowly This allows easy flow into the body.

Add pressure to injection site This prevents bleeding and bruising.

Dispose of needle safely It's best to put it in a container with a lid.