



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, 10:30 a.m., July 2, 2021)

RCDHU Issues Drug Warning for RCD Residents

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is warning residents that toxic drugs continue to circulate locally causing an increased risk of overdose.

Fentanyl has been confirmed in the local drug supply and has been present in several colours including purple, yellow and grey.

The unregulated drug supply is inconsistent and dangerous, including drugs of **any** colour. Even if you, or someone you know, is using from a familiar source, drugs may be stronger than expected and/or contain other substances that cause unpredicted effects which may include overdose.

If you are going to use drugs, never use alone. If you overdose, there will be no one there to help.

If you have access to a phone and do use alone, the National Overdose Response Service (NORS) 1-888-688-NORS (6677), an overdose prevention hotline provides 24/7 support by connecting the caller with someone who can monitor them and call for help if there is a concern of overdose – such as the caller becoming non-responsive.

It is important to call 9-1-1 right away if you suspect someone is having an overdose as they might require more naloxone than what is on hand and/or additional antidotes beyond naloxone to revive them. It is a medical emergency.

The risk of overdose can be reduced by having the following measures in place:

- **Don't use alone**
- **Don't mix drugs**—Don't mix drugs with other drugs or alcohol, as it puts you at higher risk of overdosing.
- **Go slow**—Quality of street drugs is unpredictable. Start by using in small amounts (testers or test doses) to check the strength of what you are using.
- **Carry Naloxone/Narcan®**—Naloxone can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose and kits are available for free.
- **Know your tolerance**—Risk of overdose increases if you are a new user or have not used in 3+ days.

Understanding the signs of an overdose can help save a life. Signs of an overdose can include:

- Breathing is very slow or irregular, or they may not be breathing at all
- Fingernails and/or lips are blue
- Body is limp
- Deep snoring or gurgling sounds
- Loss of consciousness/passed out (cannot wake the person up)
- Unresponsive (not answering when you talk to them or shake them)
- Pinpoint (tiny) pupils

If you suspect an overdose is occurring, **call 911 and if possible, give naloxone and CPR.**

Free naloxone kits are available throughout RCD at local pharmacies and other locations found here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/where-get-free-naloxone-kit>.

For more information visit www.rcdhu.com or call 613-732-3629 or 1-800-267-1097.

-30-

Renfrew County and District Health Unit

media@rcdhu.com

www.rcdhu.com

Fax: 613-735-3067