

# COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

## Public Health Guidance for Harm Reduction and COVID -19

May 6, 2020

### Harm Reduction and COVID-19

#### How It Spreads

- Coughing, sneezing, and spit (saliva)
- Close contact with people
- Touching surfaces contaminated with the virus, then touching your nose, mouth or eyes

#### Protect Yourself

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer for 20 seconds minimum
- Avoid close contact with people; keep a 2 metre/6 foot distance between yourself and other people
- Avoid touching your face

#### Tips for Preparing your drugs

- Wash your hands before with soap or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Wipe down surfaces with alcohol-based wipes or BZK wipes
- If you cannot prepare your own drugs, make sure the person who does has washed their hands

#### New gear every time!

- Use a new needle, cooker, water, filter, tourniquet every time
- Don't share any equipment, joints, cigarettes, pipes, drinks etc.
- Cook your drugs for at least 10 seconds (until it bubbles) every time you use. This can help kill any bacteria or viruses
- Use mouth pieces each time with smoking equipment (bowl pipe, straight pipe)
- Throw out used glass/needles in sharps bin

#### Overdose prevention and response

- Call 911. It is safe to call 911 and go to the emergency department. Emergency services may be slow to respond due to the outbreak
- Stock up on naloxone and equipment
- If responding to an overdose with naloxone, use the gloves in Naloxone kit

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- If you are trained and feel comfortable, it is safe to give naloxone and to do chest compressions during an overdose. DO NOT do rescue breathing during COVID 19
- If you need other medications, ask your health care provider for a month's supply, if possible

## Have a safety plan if self-isolating

- Call someone to let them know you are about to use
- Plan a time to check in and tell them to check in on you if they haven't heard from you
- Or call the Overdose Prevention Line when you are about to use drugs and they will stay on the line with you: 1-888-853-8542

Monday-Friday: Noon-10pm

Saturday-Sunday: Noon-midnight

<https://www.grenfellministries.org/overdose-prevention-line>

- Leave the door unlocked
- Start low, go slow. Start with small amount first, especially after a period of non-use
- Inconsistent drug supply-try small amount first
- Ask your doctor about a safe supply
- Consider methadone/suboxone treatment

## Staying safe when living with others-physical distancing tips

- Limit the number of visitors to your home as much as possible
- Stay in separate rooms away from others as much as possible
- If you are in a room with other people, keep a 2 metre/6 foot distance between yourself and other people
- Clean high touch areas (light switches, door handles, cupboard handles, faucet handles, countertops, handrails, cell phones) often with a household disinfectant following manufacturer's instructions

## If you have difficulty breathing or other severe symptoms, call 911

- Need to chat with someone about COVID-19 or showing symptoms?
- Call Telehealth: 1-866-797-0000 or SWPH: 1-800-922-0096 extension 9.

For official COVID-19 information visit: [www.swpublichealth.ca](http://www.swpublichealth.ca)