



# What is happening in BC?

British Columbia is in the midst of a public health emergency due to toxic drugs. It is affecting everyone, regardless of their job, education, age, ethnicity and race. Tragically, 2,224 people across B.C. lost their lives due to overdose caused by toxic drugs in 2021. In the Fraser Health region, our families, friends, neighbours and even ourselves, can be affected by the toxic drug crisis. When someone is using substances (drugs) that are illicit, they cannot check for the drug's contents, dosage (amount) and potency (strength). They may not know what is in their substance (drug), which can sometimes lead to an accidental overdose.

## Why should this matter to me?

We sometimes hide our struggles, especially when they might affect how other people think of us. Therefore, we might not know what someone else is going through. By educating ourselves and others, we are reducing stigma and creating a safe space for our loved ones and our community.

# What can we do to help?

## A) Know the signs and symptoms of an overdose

Knowing the signs and symptoms will help in saving lives. It will also help you educate others. Scan the QR codes to watch a video about this:



English



Punjabi

## B) Get a free Naloxone kit and training

Naloxone kits are portable pouches that contain medicine to help revive an unresponsive person who is overdosing from opioids.

To get a free naloxone kit, find a site near you using this website:

[www.towardtheheart.com/site-finder](http://www.towardtheheart.com/site-finder)



Scan the QR code to learn more about naloxone:



Free, Self-paced, Online Opioid and Naloxone Training



Nasal Naloxone Instructions



## C) Listen and check-in with loved ones, it can be one of the best ways to help!

Talking about substance use and overdose with someone you care about may not be easy. It can be tough to find the right words to say. It may take many conversations. Sometimes, it may not go the way you want. However, talking about it can reduce shame, guilt, and hesitation. It can increase our understanding and awareness. By doing this, we can save lives.

Here are four ways to talk with a loved one about substance use:

### 1. Speak from the heart

- It is important when we are having a conversation to come from a place of love, care, and concern, rather than suspicion and blame.
- Avoid blaming, shaming, and lecturing, as this will shut down the conversation. Instead, focus on your commitment to their safety and well-being.
- If the conversation does not go how you hoped, you can take a pause, apologize, and try again.

## 2. Consider the timing

- It is natural to feel nervous when talking about difficult topics like substance (drug) use.
- Let your loved one know that you would like to talk. It is important to find a time where they are willing to share.
- Choose a space that is quiet, comfortable, and free from distractions. Avoid trying to force this conversation on the spot during an argument, or right after finding out someone is using substances (drugs).
- These topics require thoughtfulness and patience. Be prepared to listen more and talk less.

## 3. Listen with an open mind

- Avoid interrupting or rushing the conversation.
- Avoid judging their experiences or reactions but realize that things seem tough for them.
- Sometimes it can be difficult for them to explain what they have been going through. If they need time to think, sit patiently.
- You can show them that you have been listening by summarizing what you have heard and ask if you have understood them properly.

Since there can be so much stigma and misunderstanding around substance (drug) use, your loved one may feel ashamed or embarrassed. It may be helpful to talk about specific actions that make you concerned. Here are some examples that can help you share your feelings:

- “I’ve noticed a change in...”
- “I feel worried about...”

## 4. Share resources

- Having ideas for where your loved one can find support can show them they are important and loved. It is possible they have thought about getting help and did not know where to start.
- By offering resources, it bridges the gap between them thinking about getting support and actually taking the next step.
- However, help may not look the same for everyone. One person may wish to continue using substances (drugs), but with more safety precautions. Another person may wish to seek detox or treatment.
- You have the right to express your opinion, and your loved one has the right to make their own decision.



## Take care of yourself and get support

Supporting someone with their substance (drug) use can be hard. You may feel sad, frustrated, and angry. Sometimes talking to someone about what you are going through and how you are feeling can help. 310-Mental Health Support is a free phone line service that allows you to speak to someone who will listen and support you. They can also share information about community resources.

### 310 Mental Health Support

**Call 310-6789** (no area code).

Available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

For languages other than English, say your language in English three times, (e.g. Punjabi Punjabi Punjabi). Wait until the interpreter comes on the phone.

For hearing impaired assistance:

- Phone number: 1-800-SUICIDE-LINE or 1-833-456-4566
- Text message: 45645



**Have a question or need help accessing health services?  
Want to get involved in supporting the South Asian community?**

Email us at [southasianhealth@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:southasianhealth@fraserhealth.ca)

Text, WhatsApp, or Call us at **236-332-6455**

For more information, visit:

[www.fraserhealth.ca/sahi](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/sahi)

[www.fraserhealth.ca/overdose](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/overdose)

