

# Toxic Drug Alert



Issued for Northern Health Region

**For Immediate Release**

September 23, 2025

Northern Health and FNHA are issuing a Drug Alert for the Northern Region. A purple paste/sample sold as 'down' has tested positive for fentanyl, benzos and medetomidine. This sample has been linked to overdose events.

Medetomidine is a non-opioid sedative that can cause an increase in overdose and fatal overdose, complex drug poisoning which involves deep and prolonged sedation and **very low or no pulse**.

Overdose symptoms may require multiple doses of naloxone or may not respond to naloxone.

Smoking is **not** safer than injecting.

## **Be cautious when using substances and follow the safety tips below:**

- Get training to prevent, recognize, and respond to an overdose; carry naloxone
- Don't use alone. Make a plan and use with a trusted person who can call for help if needed.
- If you plan to use alone, use the Lifeguard app available free on the app store or on Toward the Heart website (<https://towardtheheart.com>) or call NORS (National Overdose Response Service) **1-888-688-6677** (NORS).
- Know your tolerance. If you are sick or had a time of abstinence or reduced use, use much less.
- Don't mix drugs or mix drugs with alcohol.
- Test a small amount first and go slow.
- Use in an OPS if possible
- Access fentanyl drug checking where available (OPS sites).
- Call 911 or your local emergency number right away if someone overdoses.

## **Local overdose prevention sites (OPS)**

For information on your local OPS hours, visit the Northern Health OPS webpage:

<https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/overdose-prevention#overdose-prevention-services-ops>



**Alert in effect until:**

October 7, 2025



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



**northern health**  
the northern way of caring