



BENZODIAZEPINE ADVISORY



Date issued: March 5, 2021

In effect until: April 8, 2021

ALL INTERIOR HEALTH COMMUNITIES

Description of drugs:

Multiple drug samples in communities across the region have been found to contain benzodiazepines (benzos). These samples are often sold as “down”, heroin, or fentanyl - a wide range of colours and textures have been identified. **The Interior Health region is seeing increased overdose activity in both rural and urban communities.**

Risk:

High risk of overdose and can cause prolonged sedation, sleepiness, muscle relaxation, slurred speech, loss of consciousness, black outs/memory loss. May not respond to naloxone – continue to give breaths and seek medical attention.

Overdose response:

Naloxone does not work on Benzos, BUT naloxone will work on the opioid overdose symptoms. After giving breaths and naloxone, the person may begin breathing normally, but may not wake up. More doses of naloxone should only be given if the person is not breathing normally (less than 10 breaths a minute). If the person is breathing normally but remains unconscious, place in recovery position and stay with them until emergency services arrive.

Reduce the risk

- **Get your drugs checked** - Benzo testing is currently available at the following the locations:
 - ASK Wellness: Kamloops – 778-257-1292
 - Supervised Consumption service: Kamloops, Kelowna
 - UBCO Harm Reduction Program: Kelowna, Penticton, Vernon 250-864-1431
 - Vernon Overdose Prevention Site: 250-503-3737
 - ANKORS: Cranbrook - 250-426-3383
 - ANKORS: Nelson - 250-505-5506
 - MHSU Overdose Prevention Nurses - Penticton - 250-462-1050
- Avoid using different drugs at the same time or using drugs and alcohol together.
- Don't use alone or ask someone to check on you. If you must use while alone, consider using the [Lifeguard app](#) which can connect you with 911 emergency responders if you overdose. Download at the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).
- When using your substance start with a small amount, and then go slow.
- Use at an Overdose Prevention or Supervised Consumption Site, if one is near you.
- Know how to respond to an overdose - **call 911**, give rescue breaths and naloxone.