

Drug and Overdose Alerts Right to Your Mobile Device



Want to know about drug or overdose alerts as soon as they are issued? The [Lifeguard App](#) now sends out notifications about Drug and Overdose alerts across B.C.

Download the app on your mobile device and be sure to activate notifications.

Safer Smoking Supply Funding Extended for 3 Years!



The news we have all been waiting for has arrived! The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) announced that safer smoking supply funding has been extended until March 31st, 2024!

Use the updated [order form](#) to order as needed. Please review the [Ordering and Distribution Guidelines](#).

REGISTER NOW! Self-care Opportunity

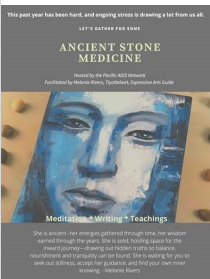
Ancient Stone Medicine with Melanie Rivers/Tiyaltwelwet.

Zoom Session - June 8th, 10am

Our friends at the Pacific Aids Network (PAN) are offering this very special session for anyone in our communities (frontline workers, peers, leadership, volunteers, allies etc.) who is feeling the pressure of their work.

About Melanie: Melanie is an Indigenous mixed media artist, instructor, and Expressive Arts Therapist from the Squamish First Nation.

About the session: This past year has been hard, and ongoing stress is drawing a lot from us all. Let's gather together to gain medicine from the ancient stone people. They have lived so long that they have experienced all hardships and joys and have been able to find stillness. They have many wisdoms to share with us. To learn more or to register please follow this [link](#).



Benzodiazepines (Benzos) Still Present in the Local Drug Supply



Our drug checking sites continue to detect benzos in the drug supply across the region – most often in “down” (opioids). Unfortunately, it has become the new “normal”. To avoid alert fatigue, the Harm Reduction Program will no longer be issuing new advisories or alerts for benzos in down unless something comes up that is unusual. Please continue to use the benzo resources below.

[Withdrawal from Benzodiazepines Mixed in BC's Illicit Drug Supply \(NEW\)](#)

[Mixed Benzo and Opioid Overdose – How to Respond](#)

[Opioids, Benzos and Etizolam – Overdose Resource](#)

[Do I Keep Giving Naloxone?](#)

Benzodiazepine Test Strip Expansion Paused Due to Risk of False Negatives



The Interior Health Harm Reduction Program has paused any further roll out of the benzo test strip program. This means that at this time we will not be supporting additional sites to offer onsite benzo test strip drug checking and will not implement a take home program. This decision was made due to the limitations of the test and the risk of false negatives. Benzo test strips can detect some kinds of benzos, but not all and they are not very good at detecting etizolam, which is one of the most

common benzos in the current drug supply. We are working with the BC Centre for Substance Use on a review of testing protocols.

For sites that we have supported to offer onsite testing with benzo test strips, **please continue to ensure the limitations of this test are clearly reviewed and understood by the client**, provide additional testing with fentanyl test strips and FTIR machines and consult with senior drug checking technicians.

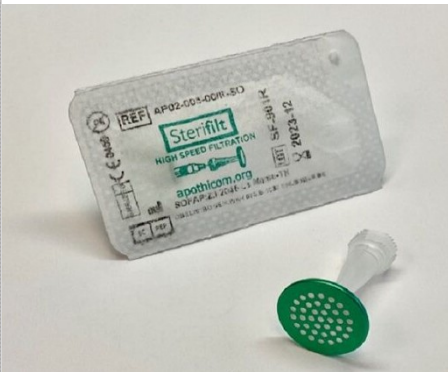
Please review the [Benzodiazepine Test Strip FAQ](#) for more information.



Episodic Overdose Prevention – eOPs – What is it?

You may have heard the term eOPs – eOPs stands for Episodic Overdose Prevention Services. e-OPS is a service not a place; it allows providers to observe substance use anywhere and anytime and to be available to respond to an overdose when necessary. e-OPS supports health and social service providers, including peer or experiential workers to observe substance use wherever overdoses may occur - not only at a fixed site like a Supervised Consumption Site or Overdose Prevention Site. e-OPS is just starting to be formally offered in B.C. It can look very different in different communities and settings. For more information on e-OPS check out this [infographic](#).

Sterifilt Fast Filters Now Available



BCCDC recently announced that Sterifilt Fast filters are available through the provincial harm reduction program. This funding is in place until March 31, 2023.

Spread the word! This is a relatively new supply for the BC Harm Reduction program and your clients may not be asking for it simply because they do not know it is available. Make the print resources below available, consider putting up posters to let people know about the new supply, talk to clients about what they are using and encourage those who are injecting tablet medications to use the filters.

What is a Sterifilt filter? This is a specialized filter to be used when injecting tablet medications (pills). Tablet medications contain fillers (e.g. coatings and powders) that can cause harm when injected, such as serious infections, abscesses and damage to the veins, skin, heart, and lungs. Filters are effective at filtering some particles from the solution but do not remove bacteria or viruses. A new filter is required for each injection to effectively filter particles and to reduce the transmission of blood borne pathogens.

How is it used? The following resources walk through the process of using the filters.

[Safer Tablet Injection Resource](#)

Videos: [Guidance for Injecting Tablet Medication](#) and [Preparing Your Drugs](#)

How do we order them? All registered harm reduction sites can order this product – please order as needed – do not stockpile - equitable access for all sites is important. Use the updated [supply order form](#) for ordering.

Communities Getting Outdoor Sharps Containers



The IH Harm Reduction Program will be providing 16 municipalities/regional districts with large 7.5 litre sharps containers to be placed in locations in community where improperly discarded sharps are often found.

The containers should start arriving later this month. Municipalities are encouraged to consult with community agencies and people with lived experience on locations for placement and to use the resources in the [Sharps Toolkit](#) to raise awareness of how to safely pick up and dispose of sharps.

Questions, comments, have a great harm reduction initiative you want to share?
Get in touch! We would LOVE to hear from you. Email us!
harmreduction.coordinator@interiorhealth.ca