

Subject line: Drug Harms Alert – Tainted Cocaine

Hello,

You are receiving this message as a part of Nova Scotia’s Drug Harms Alert distribution list. We received a report with the following details.

This report came from a community partner reporting that a supply of cocaine used by four individuals was found to be tainted.

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|---|---|
| Location/community of where the drug was used | HRM |
| Date and time when the drug was used | January 02, 2023 |
| Name(s) of the drug (i.e. what was assumed to be used/ what the drug was sold as) | Cocaine |
| Description of the drug and its packaging | N/A |
| How the drug was used | Snorting |
| Observed reaction of the drug used | 4 adult individuals (all believed to be in their 20’s) used cocaine via snorting with delayed (several hours) onset of seizures |

Example: No photo of the drug was available.

Please share through your communication networks (e.g. posters in your service locations, conversations with individual clients, social media posting, etc.).

Please also include the following harm reduction messages:

- *Don’t use alone, if possible. Keep a distance of 2 meters and respect public health measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 if using substances with others.*
 - *Overdose Prevention Sites support harm reduction by providing equipment and a safe and caring space for people to use drugs. These sites are equipped to respond to overdoses and connect people to important health and social services.*
 - *ReFIX Halifax Overdose Prevention Site:*
 - *Address: 2107 Brunswick St. Halifax; Phone: 902-209-9370*
 - *PeerSix Overdose Prevention Site*
 - *Address: 75 Prince St. Sydney; Phone: 902-567-1766*
 - *If you are using alone, call the National Overdose Response Service (NORS) phone line at 1-888-688-NORS. It is a 24/7 phone line available for anyone in Canada to call and the operator will "spot" you while you use. For more information visit www.nors.ca.*
 - *Alternatively, call a trusted support person and let them know you are using alone and provide them with your location.*
- *Start with a test dose. Start low, go slow.*
- *Have naloxone available, even if you aren’t intentionally using opioids. Although naloxone only works to reverse opioid overdoses, there is no harm in administering it if you are unsure what kind of overdose you are witnessing. Naloxone is available for free from most community pharmacies and other community locations, including needle distribution and disposal*

organizations. For more information about where to get a free naloxone kit and how to use it, visit <http://www.nsnaloxone.com/>

- Call 911 in the event of an overdose. Know your rights under the [Good Samaritan Act](#).

NOTE: This distribution list is designed to establish a flexible, low-barrier, community-driven process for communicating unexpected drug use-related harms observed in the community. Information in the alerts is not verified.

The purpose of this list is to receive and communicate community reports of overdose, suspected drug contamination, and other unexpected or elevated drug use-related harms. This list is intended for community-based organizations and health system services who provide front-line services to people who use drugs. If you have any questions, would like to join, or would like to unsubscribe from this list, please send an email to NSDrugAlert@nshealth.ca.

To submit a report, please send an email to NSDrugAlert@nshealth.ca with the subject line “Drug Report”. Please include as much of the following information, as possible:

1. Location/community of where the drug was used
2. Date and time when the drug was used
3. Name(s) of the drug (i.e. what was assumed to be used/ **what the drug was sold as**)
4. Description of the drug and its packaging, especially anything unusual
5. How the drug was used
6. Observed reaction of the drug used, especially those that are unusual compared to the expected effect of the drug
7. **Drug testing results (suspected composition of the drug)**
8. Photo of the drug, if possible

When gathering information about a drug, such as taking pictures, please ensure you respect the confidentiality and anonymity of clients and consider safety first. **Please do not include confidential or individually identifiable information (e.g. client name or picture).**