

Subject line: Drug Harms Alert –

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.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This alert is in **addition** to the alert that was issued January 3<sup>rd</sup> about tainted cocaine in HRM and is based on additional harms experienced in the community separate from the poisonings which resulted in the January 3<sup>rd</sup> alert

**This report came from a community partner reporting that a supply of cocaine used by 3 individuals was suspected to be tainted.**

Location/community of where the drug was used	West Hants, Windsor
Date and time when the drug was used	December 31, 2022
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	Unknown
How the drug was used	Cooked to make crack cocaine, purple separating to edges during the process
Observed reaction of the drug used	drug poisoning, blue lips, no head / neck control, not responding. 3 naloxone kits were required to stabilize each of the 3 affected individuals
Drug testing results (suspected composition)	none

**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](http://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](mailto:NSDrugAlert@nshealth.ca).

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**To submit a report**, please send an email to [NSDrugAlert@nshealth.ca](mailto: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).**