

Overdose Prevention

The presence of fentanyl in the drug supply means everyone is at risk every time – no matter your tolerance. You can overdose no matter your method of use - injection, smoking, or snorting. Use caution when trying a new batch for the first time – do a small test amount first to see how your body will react and avoid overdose!

BE AWARE If you have recently come out of jail, a detox/treatment program, or even went through a withdrawal period for a short time– you have a substantially higher risk of overdose.

Develop a safe use plan with someone you trust.

- Use with someone present. If you both use, take turns using and wait at least 30 minutes between each other's session. If it's not possible to use with someone, check in with someone by phone after you use.
- Have naloxone available and nearby
- Try to make yourself available to other users who may need support.

If someone has overdosed you have to **act quickly**. Call 911, administer naloxone if you have it, and give them mouth to mouth breaths every 5 seconds. Put them on their side if they begin breathing on their own.



The Recovery Position

Treatment Options

WHEN YOU ARE READY

A number of police departments in the area participate in PAARI (Police Assisted Addiction Recovery Initiative). All you have to do is walk through their doors and ask for help. They have people standing by to get you placed into a treatment facility 24/7, insurance or not, without fear of arrest.

Griffith, Highland, Schererville, Portage, Michigan City and LaPorte Police Departments participate in this.

You can also call 2-1-1 anytime and they can help find you an Open Bed.

GETTING NALOXONE

You can get naloxone (Narcan) for free with a training from:

• **Geminus in Lake County**

Call 219-757-1851

• **Porter County Health Department:**

Call 219-759-8239

You can also purchase it over the counter at CVS and Walgreens for about \$50.



United Way of Porter County

*This guide was put together by United Way of Porter County with content from Indiana Recovery Alliance and the Harm Reduction Coalition.

A GUIDE FOR Safer Drug Use and Overdose Prevention

This guide was put together on the principles of **harm reduction**. We seek to help reduce the negative consequences of substance use like overdose, infection, and disease.

We invite you to explore some ways in which you might be able to make some small changes to be safer, increase your level of self-care, and if you're ready, a way to access treatment.

You have value and you matter.

Whether or not you are ready to seek help, you deserve to take care of yourself. Learning how takes some time and thought. What can you do?

Safer Injection Toolkit

To help protect against infection and blood borne diseases, strive towards BEST.

Water

- BEST: sterile water, tap water, sealed bottled water, water boiled for at least 30 minutes
- BETTER: opened bottles of water, from toilet tank
- WORST: from front of toilet, standing water

Cotton

- BEST: new cotton pellets/balls
- BETTER: q-tips, tampons, clean cigarette butts
- WORST: old cottons, reused anything – can lead to sepsis!

Cookers and handles

- BEST: clean, sterile spoons and paperclips
- BETTER: cleaned bottle caps
- WORST: sharing cooker of any kind – can spread diseases like Hep C

Tourniquet

- BEST: tourniquet
- BETTER: something stretchy or friend's clean hand
- WORST: nothing

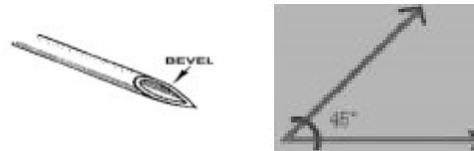
Needles

- BEST: new, sterile needle each time
- BETTER: re-used only once, shared with only one person and sterilized in between.
- WORST: sharing and reusing dirty needles.
- *Reused needles can tear larger holes in skin & veins which increases risk of infection.

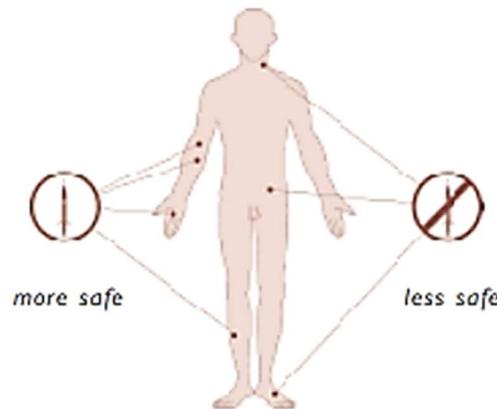
Safer Injection Practices

Clean skin and hands with soap and water first. Then use an alcohol swab if you have them.

IN VEIN - Hold needle bevel up, insert into vein at a 45 degree angle. Once you are sure you hit the vein, release the tourniquet – this prevents your vein from blowing out – then inject fluid.



To check if inserted properly, you can pull back gently on the plunger to see if you get blood coming back into the syringe. If the blood is slow moving and dark red, you are in the vein. If it is bright red and frothy, you are in an artery – pull out slowly and apply pressure.



HIERARCHY OF RISK

IN MUSCLE - Pinch muscle, insert needle straight down and inject fluid slowly.

BEWARE Muscle hits have a high risk of developing an abscess (infection under the skin).

STERILIZE YOUR EQUIPMENT

- **Bleach** – 1 part to 50 parts water for 5 minutes (don't mix with anything else!)
- **Hydrogen Peroxide** – 1 part to 10 parts water for 30 minutes
- **Rubbing Alcohol** – 5 minutes
- **Boil** – glass or metal items for 30 minutes

Other Tips

- Use in a safe, dry, well-lit space.
- Rotate your injection spot to let veins heal.
- If use same vein, inject downstream (closer to the heart) from your last shot.
- When buying syringes at the pharmacy dress up in your most boring, respectable outfit and use correct terms: “**I would like 100 28 gauge, half inch, 1mL (or 1cc) syringes**”
- If you have an infection, you have a **right** to medical care. Make sure you don't have any drugs or paraphernalia on you and go to the ER. An infection can be **fatal if not treated**.

Are you in need of food, financial assistance, finding treatment or support services?



Call 2-1-1. They can help you access to a variety of services and resources throughout Northwest Indiana. Through

OpenBeds, they can help you access treatment as well.