

SUPPORTING OPIOID TREATMENT DURING COVID-19

Opioid overdoses continue to be a serious public health issue and, for many communities, the COVID-19 [pandemic is worsening this crisis](#).

The majority of opioid-related deaths through the pandemic have been unintentional and due to the toxicity of the unregulated drug supply. Health Canada's [toolkit](#) for healthcare practitioners outlines care options for those who use drugs (including opioids) and gives information regarding:

- Legislative and regulatory requirements for substance use disorder treatment/safer supply
- Exemptions under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act
- Formulary coverage under drug plans of medications used for treatment including pharmaceutical grade alternatives to the illegal supply

The following two resources also provide information and support on caring for patients who use substances:

[MacHealth](#) is a six-part program provides an overview of key concepts and skills for clinicians facing common challenges in the management of patients with chronic pain, including reducing the risks of opioids and addressing opioid use disorder.

[Opioid Use Disorder \(OUD\) Tool by Centre for Effective Practice \(CEP\)](#) guides primary care providers through the identification and management of individuals who have problems with opioid use. It includes a step-by-step approach for initiating and maintaining Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) with buprenorphine-naloxone.

York Region Public Health offers take-home naloxone kits and harm reduction supplies such as safer injecting, inhalation and snorting equipment at no cost. Visit york.ca/harmreduction for a list of locations where residents can access harm reduction supplies and york.ca/opioids for a list of where residents can pick up a naloxone kit. During the holiday season, due to reduced service hours, agencies below may be able to support.

- The [Krasman Centre](#) - 905-780-0491
- [Inn From the Cold](#) - 905-895-8889
- [LOFT Street Outreach Van](#) - 1-866-553-4053

The [Community Services for Alcohol and Drug Use](#) document lists supports in York Region.

[Visit York Region Public Health](#) for more information and/or contact us at substance@york.ca or 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76683.

PUBLIC HEALTH

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