What to expect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>herion</th>
<th>crack/coke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The high</td>
<td>The high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high that lasts 20 minutes – 2 hours</td>
<td>A high that lasts 15–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling intense pleasure and reduced pain</td>
<td>Feeling an intense, euphoric rush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm skin, dry mouth, heavy feeling arms and legs</td>
<td>Warm skin, dry mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea, vomiting and severe itching</td>
<td>Feeling thirsty, not hungry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow, shallow breathing</td>
<td>Rapid heartbeat and breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling restless, sweaty, stomach cramps and diarrhea</td>
<td>Auditory hallucinations, delusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle spasms and bone pain</td>
<td>Sensitivity to noise and light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>Feelings of paranoia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong cravings for more heroin</td>
<td>Strong cravings for more crack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: combining substances can be dangerous. Proceed with caution.

Signs of overdose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>heroin overdose</th>
<th>crack/coke overdose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feels like:</td>
<td>Feels like:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can’t stay awake</td>
<td>Your heart is pumping fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t have any energy or strength</td>
<td>You’re short of breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can’t walk, can’t talk</td>
<td>You have chest pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks like:</td>
<td>Looks like:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow pulse or no pulse</td>
<td>Fast pulse or no pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow breathing or no breathing</td>
<td>Fast or no breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin looks pale and blue, feels cold</td>
<td>Hot and sweaty skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t wake up or talk</td>
<td>Confusion, hallucinations, unconscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils are pinned or eyes are rolled back</td>
<td>Can’t talk, can’t walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>Vomiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body is limp</td>
<td>Seizures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What to do if someone ODs

1. Call out for help – do not leave the victim
2. If they’ve OD’d on heroin, try to get them awake and moving
   If they’ve OD’d on crack/coke, try to get them to slow down and relax
3. Call 9-1-1 for an ambulance, send someone to seek help and report back
4. Tell paramedics as much as you can about what happened

Ready to detox? Help is just a phone call away.

Call Access Central at 1-866-658-1221, seven days a week from 9am to 7:45pm for detox, residential addiction services and addiction housing.

What you need to inject safer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sterile needle</th>
<th>Sterile water</th>
<th>Alcohol swabs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton filter or tampon (unscented)</td>
<td>Cooker or spoon</td>
<td>Rubber tie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighter or candle</td>
<td>Ascorbic acid/vitamin C (crack only)</td>
<td>Clean hands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your peers created this harm reduction pamphlet for you. Be safe.

© Vancouver Coastal Health, November 2023
How to inject safer

**Prepare your drugs – crack/coke**

- Pour coke into cooker/spoon
- Pour in just enough ascorbic acid to dissolve crack
- Using clean, capped needle, grind crack and ascorbic acid to mix
- If crack mixture is cloudy or has sediment, heat as needed – DO NOT BOIL
- Pour in just enough ascorbic acid to dissolve crack
- Using clean, capped needle, grind coke to mix – NO NEED TO HEAT
- Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon
- Smoke crack or extract cocaine
- Using clean, capped needle, grind coke to mix
- Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon
- Draw liquid into needle
- Place needle in filter
- Place cotton filter / piece of unscented tampon in drugs
- Place cotton filter / piece of unscented tampon in drugs
- Place needle in filter and draw liquid into needle
- Tie off with a rubber tie using a quick release
- Flag your needle: push needle in a little and pull back on plunger until you see blood in the needle
- Insert your needle with the bevel up, at a 30 degree angle towards your head
- Insert your needle with the bevel up, at a 30 degree angle towards your head
- Clean your injection site with an alcohol swab
- Clean your injection site with an alcohol swab
- Loose your tie
- Inject your drug slowly
- Pull out and with clean hands, apply pressure to injection site
- Safely dispose of all equipment – make it your gig to return your rig
- Taste your drugs before you use
- Always use with a buddy
- Use a new needle for each injection
- Please don’t break off the tip of your needle or re-cap it – it’s not safe
- Remember: two holes in your arm are better than one in the ground. If you haven’t used in a while, reduce your dose.
- Protect yourself and your community – always dispose of your equipment safely

**Prepare your drugs – heroin**

- Pour drugs in cooker/spoon
- Pour in just enough ascorbic acid to dissolve crack
- Using clean, capped needle, grind crack and ascorbic acid to mix
- If crack mixture is cloudy or has sediment, heat as needed – DO NOT BOIL
- Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon
- Smoke crack or extract cocaine
- Using clean, capped needle, grind coke to mix – NO NEED TO HEAT
- Pour coke into cooker/spoon
- Pour in just enough ascorbic acid to dissolve crack
- Using clean, capped needle, grind coke to mix – NO NEED TO HEAT
- Pour coke into cooker/spoon
- Draw liquid into needle
- Place needle in filter
- Place cotton filter / piece of unscented tampon in drugs
- Place cotton filter / piece of unscented tampon in drugs
- Place needle in filter and draw liquid into needle
- Tie off with a rubber tie using a quick release
- Flag your needle: push needle in a little and pull back on plunger until you see blood in the needle
- Insert your needle with the bevel up, at a 30 degree angle towards your head
- Insert your needle with the bevel up, at a 30 degree angle towards your head
- Clean your injection site with an alcohol swab
- Clean your injection site with an alcohol swab
- Loose your tie
- Inject your drug slowly
- Pull out and with clean hands, apply pressure to injection site
- Safely dispose of all equipment – make it your gig to return your rig
- Taste your drugs before you use
- Always use with a buddy
- Use a new needle for each injection
- Please don’t break off the tip of your needle or re-cap it – it’s not safe
- Remember: two holes in your arm are better than one in the ground. If you haven’t used in a while, reduce your dose.
- Protect yourself and your community – always dispose of your equipment safely

**Safer injection tips**

- The most dangerous place to inject is your neck
- To make your veins more visible: jog on the spot or do push-ups before tying off
- If you can’t see the bevel, look for the numbers on the side of your needle, they often line up with the bevel
- Unscented tampons are safe to use as filters – do not use cigarette filters
- Use a filter once only – using it more than once can lead to “cotton fever”
- Ties should be on for two minutes maximum
- If your hand falls asleep or arm turns red while tied off, the tie is too tight, or has been on too long
- Keep injection sites clean and watch for abscesses – they can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject
- If you have an abscess, do not pop it
- Seek medical care for treatment of abscesses or wounds – they can lead to dangerous infections

**Injecting**

- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol swabs
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol swabs
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol swabs
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol swabs
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol swabs
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)

**Filters**

- Unscented tampons are safe to use as filters – do not use cigarette filters
- Use a filter once only – using it more than once can lead to “cotton fever”
- Ties should be on for two minutes maximum
- If your hand falls asleep or arm turns red while tied off, the tie is too tight, or has been on too long

**Ties**

- Use a filter once only – using it more than once can lead to “cotton fever”
- Ties should be on for two minutes maximum
- If your hand falls asleep or arm turns red while tied off, the tie is too tight, or has been on too long

**Abscesses and wounds**

- Keep injection sites clean and watch for abscesses – they can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject
- If you have an abscess, do not pop it
- Seek medical care for treatment of abscesses or wounds – they can lead to dangerous infections
- Keep injection sites clean and watch for abscesses – they can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject
- If you have an abscess, do not pop it
- Seek medical care for treatment of abscesses or wounds – they can lead to dangerous infections
- Keep injection sites clean and watch for abscesses – they can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject
- If you have an abscess, do not pop it
- Seek medical care for treatment of abscesses or wounds – they can lead to dangerous infections

**How to inject safer**

- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)
- Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)