

INTERDISCIPLINARY GUIDELINE

B-00-13-10197 – Fentanyl Drug Checking

Fentanyl Drug Checking Protocol (Inner City Youth)

Site Applicability

Inner City Youth Program (ICY) – Foundry Vancouver Granville

Skill Level

RN, RPN, RSW, Peer Support Worker with education

Education includes:

- VCH/PHC Drug Checking Training
- VCH/PHC Drug Disposal Training
- [BCCDC Toward the Heart](#) – Take Home Naloxone education

Related Standards and Resources

1. [BCSSU Guideline for the Clinical Management of Opioid Use Disorder](#)
2. [CPF2100](#): Philosophy of Care for Patients and Residents Who Use Substances at PHC
3. [NCS6475](#): Naloxone HCl (Narcan) Administration in the Management of Suspected Opioid Overdose in Community Settings (Adults & Youth)
4. [NCS6474](#): Dispensing Naloxone Kits to Clients at Risk of Opioid Overdose (Adults & Youth)
5. [IDG1198](#): Waste: Disposal of Pharmaceutical Waste in Acute Care Settings

Clinical Indication

Clients interested in checking their drugs for the presence of fentanyl.

Need to Know

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid, far more potent than morphine and heroin. Clinically, it is used in anesthesia, and for management of chronic pain (Lexicomp, 2018). However, recently in Canada, illicit fentanyl has been sold, often mixed with other substances like heroin or oxycodone and, on many occasions, ingested unintentionally due to undisclosed pill/powder contents (Amlani et al., 2015; Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2014). In 2017, British Columbia's Coroners Service reported 1,156 fentanyl detected drug overdose deaths, representing a 73% increase over the number of fentanyl detected deaths (670) occurring in 2016.

The term “drug checking” refers to a service that enables people who use drugs to chemically analyze their street-acquired drugs and receive individualized and fact-based consultation regarding the contents, and the associated risks, of compounds detected in their samples (British Columbia Centre on Substance Use [BCSSU], 2017).

Clients Under the Age of 19

If approached by a client who appears to be a youth under the age of 19:

- Refer to a social worker for drug-checking or to consult
- If a social worker is unavailable, alert the clinical coordinator or intake coordinator

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Social worker or designate will assess:

- Imminent child protection concerns
- Determine whether the youth has a history of illicit drug use
- Provide appropriate and expedited referrals to primary health care, addictions care, shelter and/or mental health or other services as indicated by the information gathered

Equipment & Supplies

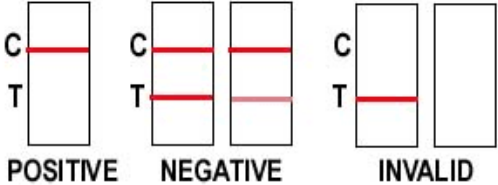
1. Rapid Response™ Fentanyl Test Strip
2. Plastic cup (e.g., urine specimen, medication cup)
3. 30 mL (1 ounce) of tap water
4. Blue pad
5. Gloves
6. Face mask
7. Deterra™ medication disposal system pouch
8. British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Take Home Naloxone (THN) Kit

Drug Checking Protocol

Preparation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff may offer drug-checking for the presence of fentanyl to clients by asking: “Do you want to check your drugs for fentanyl?” 2. Under the supervision of a staff member, the client can gather the necessary supplies. 3. Staff to wear face mask and gloves prior to next steps.
Drug Checking	<p><i>Drug checking to be done by client with staff supervision.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Place blue pad on desk/surface to be used for drug checking. 5. Fill a plastic cup with 30 mL (1 ounce) of tap water. 6. Place a few grains of drug (the size of salt will suffice) to be tested in water <u>OR</u>: if testing from a used cooker before or after use, cover the bottom of the cooker with water to rinse and pour into plastic medication cup with tap water. 7. Remove the fentanyl test strip from pouch. 8. Holding the strip from the solid blue end, dip the white end of the strip into the water up to the blue line for at least <u>10 to 15 seconds</u> (to avoid contamination, do not touch strip end with hands).  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. After 10 to 15 seconds, remove the test strip from the fluid and place on a non-absorbent surface (e.g., on top of the test strip box), watch time, and <u>read results at 5 minutes, but no later than 10 minutes.</u>

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Results/ Interpretation	<p>10. Reading the results:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Control: Ensure that a control line appears in the control (C) region before reporting any patient result. Failure for a control line to appear is most likely due to insufficient specimen volume or incorrect procedural techniques. Repeat with a new test strip. • Negative: Two color bands = Negative A coloured line in the control region (C) and a coloured line in the test line (T) indicate a negative result. * Note: The presence of any line (regardless of intensity) should be interpreted as a negative result. • Positive: One color band = Positive A coloured line in the control region (C) but no line in the test line (T) indicates a positive result. <p>*Note: this is the opposite of what you would expect as a negative on a urine pregnancy test.</p>
Clean-up	<p>11. Dispose of blue pad in the garbage. See 'Drug Disposal' section for details related to drug, water, and container disposal.</p>

Patient Education

- **Harm reduction conversation:** as the test takes at least 5 minutes to produce a reliable result, use this time to briefly chat with the client in a harm reduction conversation, with efforts to engage them in care and assess their current access to health and social services. Please also check in about their needs being met and offer to refer to services if appropriate.
- **Informing patient of the result:**
 - If **negative**, it is important to note that the strips test for fentanyl and some fentanyl analogues. A negative result does not ensure that their drugs are safe. Harm reduction practices should always be used.
 - If **positive**, feedback from the client should be sought, particularly if this was an unexpected result. Consider offering the following interventions:
 - Option to dispose of contaminated drug
 - Information on reducing harm from injection
 - Take Home Naloxone education (nurse to dispense kit)
 - Information on Supervised Injection and Overdose Prevention Sites

Data Collection

Following every drug check, complete the *Fentanyl Drug Checking Data Collection Form* ([Appendix A](#)), ensuring that results are documented while maintaining client anonymity. ICY's Patient Care Manager will email the form to the British Columbia Harm Reduction Program on the first Monday of every month to support provincial drug checking outcome evaluation.

Resources

- Overdose Prevention Sites & Supervised Consumption Sites Brochure ([Appendix B](#))
- Overdose Survival Guide Brochure ([Appendix C](#))
- [Take Home Naloxone education and kit](#)
- Rapid Access and Addiction Clinic Brochure ([Appendix D](#))

Drug Disposal

- Water used to test drugs for fentanyl should be disposed of in a VMID Stericycle container (see Figure 1), containing VernalGel solidifier. See [IDG1198](#) for more information related to pharmaceutical waste disposal.



Figure 1. VMID Stericycle container (left) and VernalGel solidifier (right).

- The plastic container used to test drugs for fentanyl can be disposed of in the garbage.
- Clients who wish to dispose of their drugs may do so in a Detera pouch (see Figure 2). The pouch uses charcoal to deactivate drugs, thereby making them inactive and safe to dispose of in a regular trash bin.
 1. Place unused drugs in pouch.
 2. Fill hallway with warm tap water and wait 30 seconds.
 3. Seal and gently shake pouch and dispose with normal trash.



Figure 2. Detera medication disposal system pouch.

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References

1. Amlani, A., McKee, G., Khamis, N., Raghukumar, G., Tsang, E., & Buxton, J. A. (2015). Why the FUSS (Fentanyl Urine Screen Study)? A cross-sectional survey to characterize an emerging threat to people who use drugs in British Columbia, Canada. *Harm reduction journal*, 12(1), 54.
2. British Columbia Centre on Substance Use. A guideline for the Clinical Management of Opioid Use Disorder. February 2017. Available from: http://www.bccsu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/BC-OUD-Guidelines_June2017.pdf
3. British Columbia Coroners Service. Information bulletin: Fentanyl-detected illicit drug overdose deaths January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2017. 2018. Available from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/death-investigation/statistical/fentanyl-detected-overdose.pdf>
4. Kerr, T., & Tupper, K. (2017). *Drug checking as a harm reduction intervention: Evidence review report*. British Columbia, Canada. British Columbia Centre on Substance Use. Available from <http://www.bccsu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Drug-Checking-Evidence-Review-Report.pdf>

Persons/Groups Consulted

Executive Director, Foundry
Program Director, Mental Health Program, PHC
Program Director, Urban Health Program, PHC
Physician Program Director, Interdisciplinary Substance Use Program, PHC
Medical Director, Regional Addiction Program, PHC/VCH
Medical Health Officer, VCH
Nurse Educator, Overdose Emergency Response, VCH
Patient Care Manager, Inner City Youth, PHC
Clinical Nurse, Inner City Youth, PHC
Nurse Practitioner, Inner City Youth, PHC
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Providence Health Care Practice Standards Committee

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Questions, concerns, comments about PHC guidelines can be emailed to: nursingstds@providencehealth.bc.ca

Appendix A: Fentanyl Drug Checking Data Collection Form




**Inner City Youth – Foundry Granville
FENTANYL DRUG TESTING DATA COLLECTION FORM**

Date (YY/MM/DD)	Substance tested according to client (e.g. heroin)	Test conducted PRE- or POST- consumption (Pre / Post)	fentanyl test results (Positive / Negative)	Drug disposed (Yes / No)	Comments

Submitted to Provincial Harm Reduction Program on: _____ by: _____
Date Printed name

Appendix B: Overdose Prevention Sites & Supervised Consumption Services Brochure



Vancouver Coastal Health
Preventing illness. Ensuring care.

VCH Harm Reduction
April 9, 2018

OVERDOSE ALERT

Use Overdose Prevention Sites & Supervised Consumption Services



<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: green; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">+</div> <div> Overdose Prevention Society 58 E. Hastings 62 E. Hastings (alley for smoking) </div> </div>	8am - 11pm, 7 days/week.
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: purple; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">♥</div> <div> Insite - 139 E. Hastings </div> </div>	9am - 3am, 7 days/week 24 hours/day on Wed/Thurs/Fri of cheque week
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: blue; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">●</div> <div> Maple Hotel (alley) - 177 E. Hastings </div> </div>	7am - 5pm, 7 days/week
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: blue; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">■</div> <div> Molson (alley) 166 E. Hastings </div> </div>	1pm - 11pm, 7 days/week, 1pm - 7am, Tue/Wed/Thurs of cheque week
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: orange; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">■</div> <div> VANDU - 380 E. Hastings </div> </div>	10am - 10pm, 7 days/week
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: yellow; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">▲</div> <div> SisterSpace - 135 Dunlevy Ave. Women only </div> </div>	6am-noon & 6pm to midnight, 7 days/week
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: pink; font-size: 1.2em; margin-right: 5px;">★</div> <div> The Powell St Getaway - 528 Powell St. </div> </div>	8am - 11pm, 7 days/week

Check your drugs for fentanyl or carfentanyl for free at any of these sites

Community Drug Checking at Inner City Youth if you are 12-24 years old - 1260 Granville St, 1pm-5pm, Mon-Fri

FTIR spectrometer available at Insite (♥) 11am-7pm Mon, 10am-7pm Tues-Weds

Powell St Getaway (★) 10am-4pm Thurs, 10am-3pm Fri

<http://www.vch.ca/public-health/harm-reduction/overdose-prevention-response>

Appendix C: Overdose Survival Guide

OVERDOSE SURVIVAL GUIDE

TIPS TO SAVE A LIFE

Overdose Prevention and Response

PREVENTION

OVERDOSE IS MOST COMMON WHEN:

- Your tolerance is lower: you took a break, were in detox/treatment or jail, or you are new to use
- You have been sick, tired, run down, dehydrated or have liver issues
- You mix drugs: prescribed or not, legal or illegal
- The drugs are stronger than you are used to: changes in supply, dealer, or town

TO PREVENT OVERDOSE:

- Know your health status and your tolerance
- Do not mix drugs and alcohol. If you do mix, choose to use drugs before alcohol
- Be aware: using drugs while on prescribed medications can increase overdose risk
- Don't use alone. Leave door unlocked. Tell someone to check on you
- Do testers to check strength. Use less. Pace yourself
- Talk to an experienced person or a trusted healthcare provider about reducing risk
- Know CPR and get trained on giving naloxone
- Choose a safer route of taking drugs

THE RECOVERY POSITION

KEEP THE AIRWAY CLEAR

Hand supports head

Knee stops body from rolling onto stomach

Stay with person. If you must leave them alone at any point, or if they are unconscious, put them in this position to keep airway clear and prevent choking.

CHOOSE A SAFER ROUTE

SAFER / NO USE	SWALLOWED	SNORTED / SMOKED / INSERTED	INJECTED	MORE LIKELY TO OVERDOSE

<https://sossafetymagazine.com/drugs-alcohol/overdose-survival-guide/>

Appendix D: PHC Rapid Access and Addiction Clinic Brochure




HOW TO GET HERE

When you enter St. Paul's Hospital from the main entrance on Burrard Street, please turn left towards the gift shop.

Once you pass the gift shop, please take the first elevator to your right, up to the 2nd floor.

After exiting the elevator, please turn left until you reach the Reception of the RAAC, which is located in Room 2B-184 on the left hand side. Look for the overhead signage to the RAAC.



CONTACT US



Call us at: 604-806-8867

Location:
St. Paul's Hospital
2B-184 1081 Burrard Street
2nd Floor Burrard Building
Vancouver, BC

Clinic hours:
7 days a week (incl. stat. holidays)
from 09:00 – 16:00
Patients dropping in for appointments after 2pm may be declined when clinic is busy. Please call to check.

Rapid Access Addiction Clinic




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