



### **Xylazine detected in Thunder Bay**

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit & Thunder Bay Drug Strategy are writing to advise health care providers that xylazine was detected with fentanyl as part of a toxicology report to the OPP because of an overdose death in April 2023. This is the first time we have confirmed presence of xylazine in the drug supply in Thunder Bay. Given the length of time that has elapsed since the death and the confirmation of xylazine, we are issuing a bulletin to health care providers rather than an alert to the community.

**Background:** Xylazine is a non-opioid pain reliever developed as a sedative and muscle relaxant for animals. Concerning substances, such as xylazine, have been detected in the street supply with increasing frequency in Canada, and is most frequently detected in Ontario. This is the first time xylazine has been detected in the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

On July 7, 2023, the Centre for released the following national bulletin: [An Update on Xylazine in the Unregulated Drug Supply: Harms and Public Health Responses in Canada and the United States](#)

**Counselling patients:** If you work with people who use drugs, please encourage the following practices to reduce the risk of harm from contaminated street drugs:

- If you use drugs, start with a smaller amount (**start low, go slow**)
- Don't use drugs alone; use with someone you trust, **visit Path 525 @ NorWest CHC** or download the **Lifeguard Connect App**:



- Pick up a **FREE naloxone** kit from Superior Points or a pharmacy
- **Call 911** if your high feels unusual, or if you suspect someone is overdosing. The [Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act](#) provides legal protection from drug-related charges for carrying drugs for personal use and other simple possession offences.
- Sign up for **e-mail opioid alerts** from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit:  
<https://www.tbdhu.com/health-topics/alcohol-other-drugs/opioid-information-system>
- If you are experiencing a crisis: **Crisis Response @ 807-346-8282** or **NAN HOPE @ 1-844-626-4673**

Naloxone and overdose awareness training are available for free through the Thunder Bay District Health Unit: <https://www.tbdhu.com/health-topics/alcohol-other-drugs/preventing-opioid-overdose-naloxone>. Naloxone is also available at many pharmacies in Thunder Bay: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/where-get-free-naloxone-kit>.