

## **COVID-19 Guidance for People Who Use Substances**

Be aware that some early symptoms of withdrawal and COVID-19 infection are similar. These include fever and muscle soreness. If symptoms include a persistent cough, it could be COVID-19.

### **YOU MAY BE AT AN INCREASED RISK OF BECOMING SERIOUSLY ILL OR DYING BECAUSE:**

1. COVID-19 infection will worsen the impacts of opioids, benzodiazepines and alcohol
2. Opioid withdrawal may worsen breathing difficulties
3. Smoking, including drugs makes breathing problems worse

**DIFFICULT TO INHALE:** If you smoke drugs, cigarettes or vapes, COVID-19 will make it more difficult to inhale. Smoking drugs, cigarettes, or vapes will worsen breathing problems.

**IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GETTING SICK:** Avoid going to your local harm reduction and addictions programs – have them deliver supplies to you. Tell them you are sick, so they can take steps to keep themselves and you safe.

**BE PREPARED FOR INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL:** Be ready to go through involuntary withdrawal. Talk to a medical provider about starting methadone or buprenorphine. Make sure you have all the necessary medications, food, and drinks needed to help detox. Try to have protein-based snacks and electrolyte drinks on hand.

**STOCK UP ON THINGS YOU MAY NEED TO MANAGE YOUR SUBSTANCE USE AND PRACTICE HARM REDUCTION.**