

Drug Alert for Huron and Perth Counties

Xylazine found locally

Issued: March 3rd, 2023

The Huron Perth Drug Strategy has received confirmation that the non-opioid 'xylazine' has been found locally. Risk of exposure to xylazine may occur when using substances.

This week, an Ontario-wide memo about the presence of xylazine and benzodiazepines in the unregulated drug supply was issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Chief Coroner.

Xylazine is an animal tranquilizer. It is not intended for human use and when consumed in combination with other drugs, increases the risk of overdose and death.

- Xylazine can lower heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing. Repeated exposure may lead to severe abscesses or wounds in areas other than injection sites.
- Both opioids and stimulants can be 'cut' or contaminated with xylazine.
- Combining xylazine with opioids, benzodiazepines or alcohol can depress vital functions, increasing the risk of overdose and death.

Safety Messaging:

- **Don't use alone**
- **Carry naloxone**
 - **Xylazine and benzodiazepine effects are not reversed by naloxone, the opioid effect is temporarily reversed. Give naloxone.**
- **Start slow with a test dose**
- **Call 911 and stay with the overdosing person**
- **Connect to services: opioid antagonist treatments for people with opioid use disorder**

Free naloxone kits are available across Huron and Perth at:
Pharmacies, CMHA and Huron Perth Public Health