



# Guide to Safer Substance Use

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This package was created by the Healthy U program at the University of Manitoba. Healthy U is a UM student group made up of a team of friendly volunteers who are trained student health educators.

We provide students with validated health information through our health packages and outreach events, online resources, and one-on-one support. Health topics that we provide resources on include mental health, sexual health, physical health, substance use, social and cultural wellness, and finding a balance.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions at:  
[healthyu@umanitoba.ca](mailto:healthyu@umanitoba.ca)



# Drugs and Your Body

People use drugs for all types of reasons. All substance use comes with risks, meaning there is **no drug that is 100% safe**. If you choose to use, learning more about the substance you're taking and how it interacts in your body can reduce the risk of harm.

## Uppers

Stimulants (uppers) are drugs that **speed up your body**. Your heart rate and breathing gets faster, while making you feel energetic and more alert. Some examples of uppers are Cocaine, Crystal Meth, and ecstasy (MDMA)

## Downers

Depressants (downers) do the opposite of uppers and **slow down your body**. If you have taken downers, you may feel like your mental and physical alertness is slower and your body is more relaxed than normal. Some examples of downers are Heroin, Gamma-Hydroxy-Butyrate (GHB) and Morphine.

## Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens (psychedelics) can **change** the way you **hear, smell, taste, see** and **feel** things, while also changing your **mood** and the way you **think**. Some examples of psychedelics are Mushrooms, LSD and Ketamine.



# What are the risks?

Substance use is only risk-free if you don't use at all. If you choose to use, it's also important to **recognize who you are as a person**. Your size, mood, and gender all matter and can affect how you react to the drug.

## Mental Health

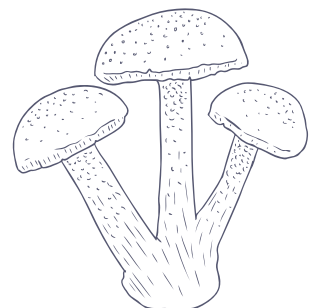
People who have been diagnosed with a mental illness are at higher risk for addiction. Also, people who use drugs are at a higher risk for receiving a mental illness diagnosis. Substance use can work both ways.

## Relationships

If a family member or friend does not agree with your choice to use, then this could place a strain on your relationship. Being able to recognize when your drug use is placing harm on others is important.

## Physical Health

Depending on how often you use, your body can create a tolerance. When a tolerance is created, you'll need higher doses to get the effect you want. Tolerance can easily turn into a dependence where your body needs the drug to function normally.



# Safer Drug Use

How can you use drugs in a safer way if you choose to use?

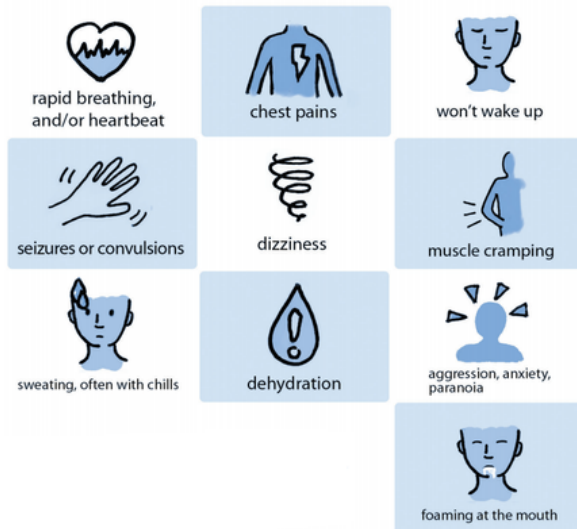
Here are some helpful tips for safer drug use:

- **Avoid mixing.** Mixing uppers can cause you to overheat and can be hard on your heart. Mixing downers can increase your risk of fainting.
- **Start low and go slow.** If this is your first time using, taking small doses and taking breaks in between can allow you to recognize how your body is reacting.
- **Never use alone or in isolation.** Having people around to check up on you and call emergency services in the case of an overdose can keep you and others around you safer.
- **Test your drugs.** If you have access to a testing kit, or know an organization that does drug testing, it would be good to check the purity of the drug you're choosing to take.
- **Use clean supplies.** Using sterile supplies for drug use is important to reduce your risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections (STI's).
- **Drink water.** It's easy to get dehydrated if you use drugs, so try do drink water before and after you use to avoid dehydration. Avoid alcohol or caffeinated drinks as they can dehydrate you even more.

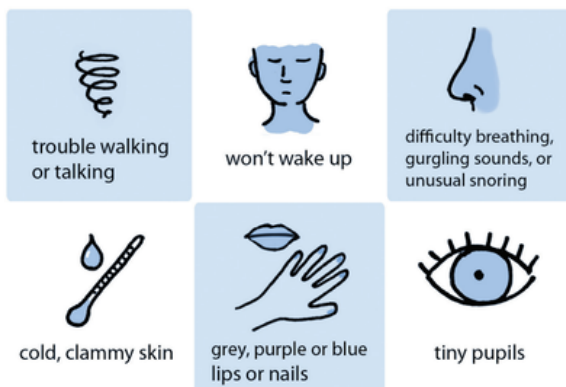


# Recognizing Overdose

## Overdose on Uppers



## Overdose on Downers



Be sure to **call 911** right away if the person is not waking up or they are not breathing! Stay with the person who used to make sure they're okay while you wait for emergency services.

# Naloxone

## What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is a medication that reverses the effects of **opioid related overdose** and prevents death.

## Can I access Naloxone?

Yes! University of Manitoba community members have access to the free **Take Home Naloxone program** run by Health and Wellness. For more information, contact Bryanna Barker at 204-474-6740 or [healthandwellness@umanitoba.ca](mailto:healthandwellness@umanitoba.ca).

If you know someone who is not a University of Manitoba community member, but would benefit from having a Naloxone kit at home, contact Street Connections at (204)981-0742 or access [www.streetconnections.ca](http://www.streetconnections.ca) to find the nearest supplier.



# UM Resources

## Safer Substance Use

### **Student Counselling Centre (SCC)**

The SCC provides students with supports for their mental wellness. The offer offers individual counselling, workshops, and groups.

474 UMSU University Centre

204 474-8592

<https://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/student-health-and-wellness/student-counselling-centre-scc>

### **Health and Wellness**

The Health and Wellness Educator is a Registered Psychiatric Nurse and available to talk about health and wellness topics.

469 UMSU University Centre (within the SCC)

204-295-9032

[healthandwellness@umanitoba.ca](mailto:healthandwellness@umanitoba.ca)

<https://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/health-wellness>

### **Empower Me**

Empower Me is a service that is available to UMSU and UMGSA members that have student insurance through the university.

Empower Me, which has a range of specialists that can provide individualized support by phone, video conference, or by an in-person visit, depending on COVID-19.

[https://studentcare.ca/rte/en/IHaveAPlan\\_UniversityofManitoba\\_EmpowerMe\\_EmpowerMe](https://studentcare.ca/rte/en/IHaveAPlan_UniversityofManitoba_EmpowerMe_EmpowerMe)

### **Indigenous Student Centre (ISC)**

The Indigenous Student Centre welcomes and supports Indigenous students and offers programming for students at any level of study, including Indigenous leadership development. They also provide opportunities for students, staff and the wider community to learn about First Nations, Inuit and Métis culture.

Migizii Agamik - Bald Eagle Lodge

[isc@umanitoba.ca](mailto:isc@umanitoba.ca)

204-474-8850

<https://umanitoba.ca/indigenous/student-experience>

### **Healthy U**

Healthy U provides students with health and wellness resources.

[healthyuofm@umanitoba.ca](mailto:healthyuofm@umanitoba.ca)

<https://www.healthyuofm.com/>

### **University Health Services (UHS)**

UHS provides health care services for UM students.

ACW-Lot temporary trailer (behind the Isbister building)

204-474-8411

<https://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/health-wellness/university-health-service>

# Off Campus Resources

## Safer Substance Use

### Winnipeg, MB

#### Manitoba Addictions Helpline

Should you be experiencing challenges with alcohol use, you can phone the MB Addictions Helpline and be connected with a counsellor.

Drop In: River Point Centre, 146 Magnus Ave

General Line: 1-855-662-6605

<http://mbaddictionhelp.ca/>

#### Rapid Access to Addiction Medicine (RAAM)

The RAAM clinic can provide education, counselling, medication or other supports for those looking to change their substance use. The RAAM clinic is embedded in 2 locations in Winnipeg.

- River Point Centre 204-644-6209
- Crisis Response Centre 204 792 7159

<https://afm.mb.ca/programs-and-services/raam/>

#### Street Connections

Offers safer drug use supplies, safer sex supplies, home visits, nursing services and counselling and referrals.

496 Hargrave Street, Monday to Friday,

8:30 am - 4:30 pm

204-981-0742

[www.streetconnections.ca](http://www.streetconnections.ca)

#### Addictions Foundation of Manitoba

AFM provides resources, courses, and services for people with substance use issues.

Manitoba Addictions Helpline: 1-855-662-6605

<https://afm.mb.ca/>

#### AA, GA, NA...Anonymous

Join a group of people who share common experiences and challenges with alcohol, gambling or drug use.

<https://meetings.intherooms.com/ga/Winnipeg-GA/all/38298>

#### Al-Anon

A group for people looking for support with respect to worrying or feeling effected by a loved one's drinking patterns.

<https://al-anon.org>



# Off Campus Resources

## Safer Substance Use

### Online

#### **TorontoVibe.com**

Provides harm reduction tips for a safer night out.

[www.torontovibe.com](http://www.torontovibe.com)

#### **Trip! Project**

Provides safer sex and drug use tips.

[www.trippproject.ca](http://www.trippproject.ca)

#### **Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction**

Access resources about substance use.

<https://www.ccsa.ca/resources-alcohol>

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

Access resources on different types of substance use.

<https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets.htm>

#### **Student Mental Health Support Network**

Explore this interactive learning module on Alcohol and Substance Use.

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/kS5HH31pjDuJ1dC2CDdiiEiPqFqMK2bw#/>

#### **Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction: Knowing your Limits with Cannabis Use Toolkit**

Helps people reflect on their cannabis use patterns while providing tips and strategies to encourage lower-risk behaviours to reduce harm.

<https://www.ccsa.ca/knowning-your-limits-cannabis-practical-guide-assessing-your-cannabis-use>

#### **Knowing your Limits with Alcohol Toolkit PDF**

Helps people reflect on their alcohol use patterns while providing tips and strategies to encourage lower-risk behaviours to reduce harm.

[https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2019-08/CCSA-Knowing-Your-Limits-with-Alcohol-Guide-2019-en\\_0.pdf](https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2019-08/CCSA-Knowing-Your-Limits-with-Alcohol-Guide-2019-en_0.pdf)