

# DO YOU INJECT DRUGS?

## Please read this essential information on coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus causes flu like symptoms and can affect your lungs.

The virus affects your breathing. Drugs like heroin, methadone and valium can also affect your breathing and make you more vulnerable to infection and fatal overdose.

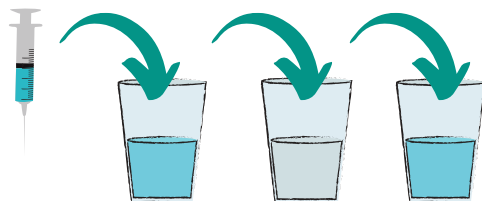
This leaflet tells you how to protect yourself and others.

- 1** Clean any drug packaging, wraps or baggies with alcohol wipes as soon as possible after buying
- 2** Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds regularly - and always before preparing or taking drugs
- 3** Prepare your own drugs to reduce the risk of infection from others
- 4** Always prepare drugs on a surface which has been cleaned using anti-bacterial spray or alcohol wipes or use a temporary surface like kitchen roll or a clean magazine and dispose of it afterwards
- 5** Wash injecting sites before and after injecting with soap and water - use swabs before injecting only
- 6** Dispose of all equipment into a sharps bin, do not dip bins

Using new equipment greatly reduces the risk of ALL infections. During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, when you go to get new injecting equipment, always try and take enough equipment to last two weeks.

Make sure you get a naloxone kit and keep it with you when you are using.

**If you can't get new equipment, ensure works are cleaned using three different containers - see overleaf**





### **Container 1 - Water**

Draw clean water into the syringe from a cup or container until the barrel is full and flush the contents down the sink.



### **Container 2 - Thin Bleach**

Draw up the bleach into the syringe until the barrel is full and flush contents down the sink.



### **Container 3 - Water**

Draw clean water into the syringe from a cup or container until the barrel is full and flush the contents down the sink. Never share cups with anyone.

## **Drug supply during the outbreak**

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak may cause an interruption to the usual supply of drugs. This could mean that drugs are cut with something unexpected or may not contain only (or any of) the drug you expect. Therefore, the risk of overdose may be higher. Test dose first if possible. Do not use alone.

## **Withdrawal**

If you can't get the drugs you usually take, you could experience symptoms of withdrawal. Withdrawal symptoms can include seizures, sickness, diarrhoea, headaches, pains and hallucinations. Severity of symptoms will vary depending on the type and amount of drug used but most symptoms ease with time. You can contact treatment services for advice and support.

## **Taking downers?**

Opiates (like heroin, methadone, dihydrocodeine, etc) and benzodiazepines (like valium, etizolam, 'blues', etc) reduce your ability to breathe. Coronavirus (COVID-19) also affects your breathing so using downers during the outbreak is more dangerous than usual. Do not use alone and have a naloxone kit available.

## **Accessing services**

Needle exchange services will try to run as normal during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. A list of needle exchanges near you can be found at -

**[www.needleexchange.scot](http://www.needleexchange.scot)**

A list of treatment services near you can be found at -

**[www.scottishdrugservices.com](http://www.scottishdrugservices.com)**

## **Where to get information**

**Keep up to date with the facts and safety advice about Coronavirus (COVID-19) by using trusted sources like:**

NHS Inform - **[www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](http://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus)**

Scottish Drugs Forum - **[www.sdf.org.uk/covid-19](http://www.sdf.org.uk/covid-19)**

CREW 2000 - **[www.crew.scot/coronavirus-general-hygiene-tips](http://www.crew.scot/coronavirus-general-hygiene-tips)**

Mental Health Foundation - **[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus)**