

# **PRIORITY DRUG ALERT**

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## **Evidence of harm from possible contaminated heroin and unlicensed benzodiazepines**

**There is evidence from a number of recent overdose incidents, that there might be contaminated heroin in the West Sussex area (Particularly Worthing). There is some evidence from Brighton that there might also be unlicensed Phenazepam circulating, possibly being sold as other benzodiazepines such as valium.**

If you suspect that your heroin could be contaminated, there are some actions and precautions (see page 2) you can take to reduce the potential harms or risk of overdose.

**It can be highly dangerous to take substances that are unlicensed and/or not prescribed for you**

**CGL's West Sussex Drug & Alcohol Wellbeing Network can be contacted via First Step 0330 118 1113**

**[www.changegrowlive.org](http://www.changegrowlive.org)**

## **Action and Precautions:**

The only way to avoid all the risks is to not take drugs which are not prescribed for you. However, if you do choose to take them, please bear in mind the following points for safer use.

**It is extremely hard, if not impossible, to tell from sight whether heroin has been mixed with other substances.**

- Be extra cautious about the sources from which you get your drugs, and about the drugs you are taking; reduce how much you use with your first 'hit'.
- Do not use alone; make sure that someone you trust is with you and that there is Naloxone ready to use if needed. Naloxone is a drug that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose and can therefore help prevent overdose deaths. Your local substance misuse service can provide pens and training.
- Watch carefully for the signs of an overdose, e.g., loss of consciousness, shallow or absent breathing, 'snoring', and/or blue lips or fingertips.
- Be ready to call for an ambulance immediately if someone overdoses and be ready to use Naloxone, if available and you know how to.
- Make sure there is enough Naloxone available. You may need more Naloxone to recover from an overdose that involves contaminated heroin.
- If you or anyone you know wants to be given a Naloxone pen to carry and be trained to use one, please contact your local substance misuse service.

**If you have been affected by any of these issues and want to talk to somebody, please get in touch with your local substance misuse service.**

CGL guarantee to give a non-judgmental approach and will support you according to your needs and wishes.