



# **BENZO BASICS**

Vancouver CAT

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# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

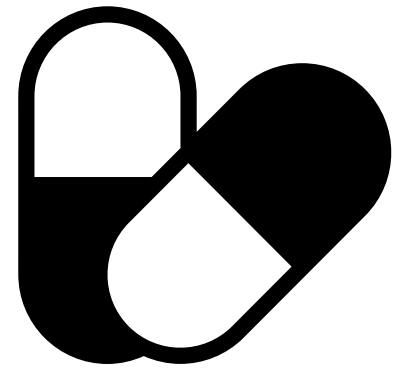
The land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (TsleilWaututh) Nations.



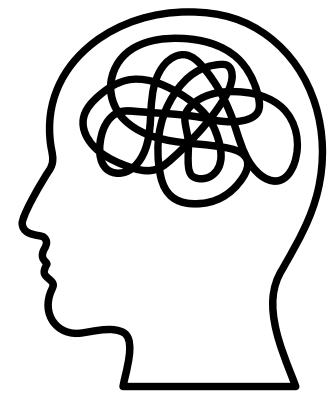
# AGENDA

1. What are benzos?
2. Stats
3. Prevention and safety
4. Benzo OD signs
5. Benzo OD response
6. Benzo withdrawal
7. Questions

# WHAT ARE BENZOS?



Depressant  
Medications



Used for sleep,  
anxiety, withdrawal,  
and seizures



Examples:  
Valium (diazepam)  
Ativan (Lorazepam)  
Xanax  
Clonazepam  
Etizolam

# DRUG CHECKING STATS

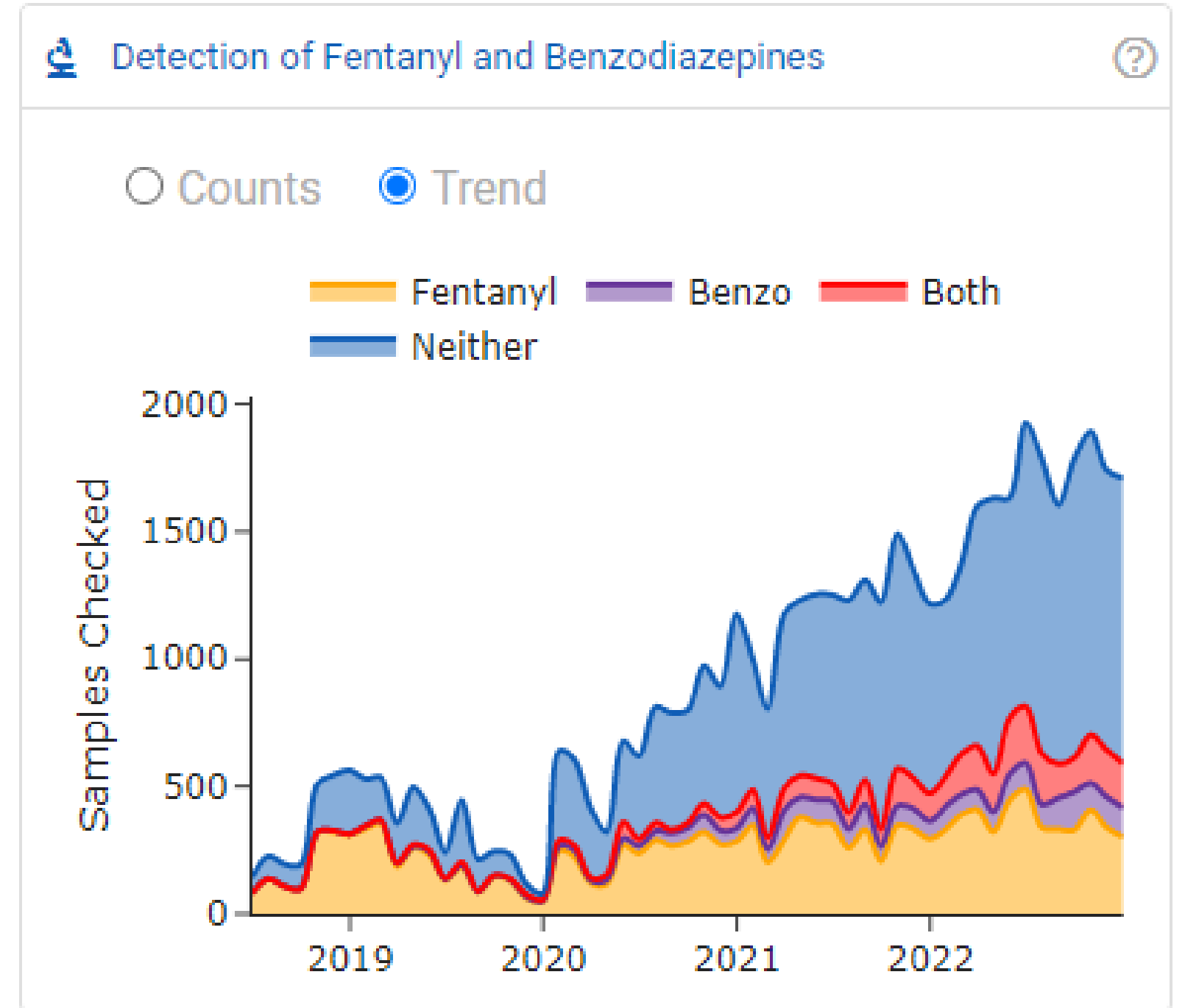
Over the last 3 years in VCH, Benzos were found in:

**46%**

Depressant samples

**14%**

Overall Opioid Samples



**RATES INCREASING SINCE 2019**

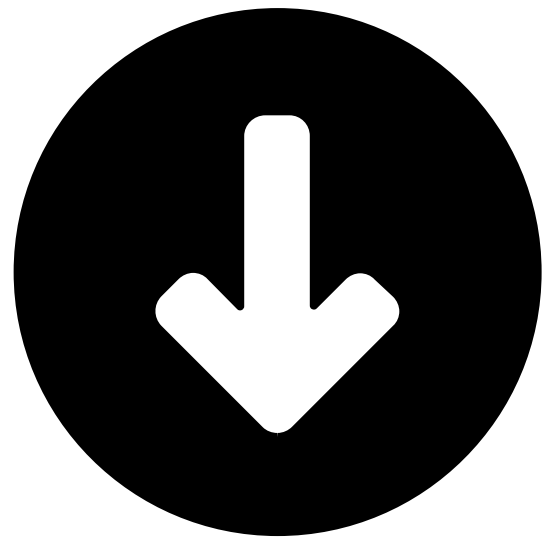
# PREVENTION



Avoid using alone



Avoid mixing

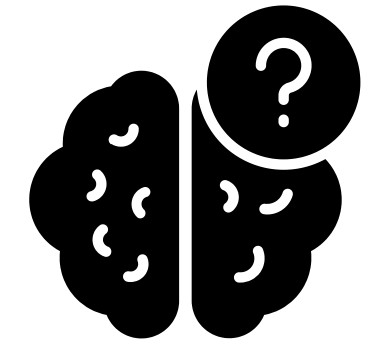


Go low and slow



Check your drugs

# SAFETY



Blackouts,  
memory loss



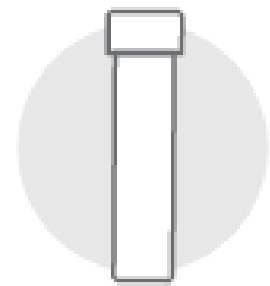
Vulnerable to  
theft or assault

# BENZO TEST STRIPS

## Benzodiazepine Test Strips

Benzos are being found in the illicit drug supply—in both up and down  
You can **test your drugs** with benzo strips

To dissolve the benzos:



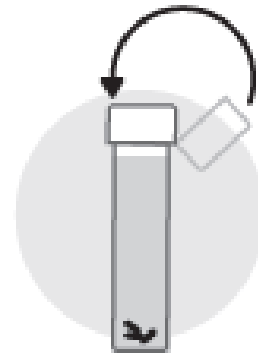
Use the small tube  
with the lid



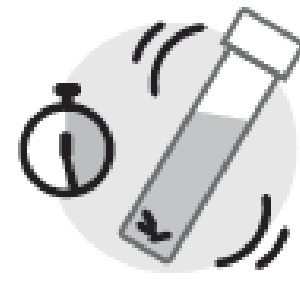
Put a small amount  
of your drug in  
the tube



Fill the tube almost  
to the top (2mL)

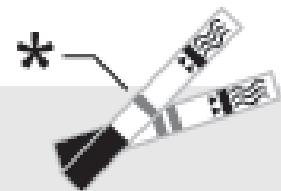


Snap the lid down



Shake the tube for  
30 seconds\*

\* You will need to shake your sample because benzos don't dissolve well in water



Benzo test strip results have  
fainter result lines than fentanyl  
test strips – be sure to review  
the results of your test under  
bright lighting



**Benzo test strips aren't perfect.**  
Not all benzos will show up on  
the test strips.



Even if you test your drugs  
with a benzo test strip, please  
**never use alone**

Not for take-home

Done by staff at OPS

Need to be shaken

Not perfect

Spectrometer testing:  
Insite

M-F 830-430

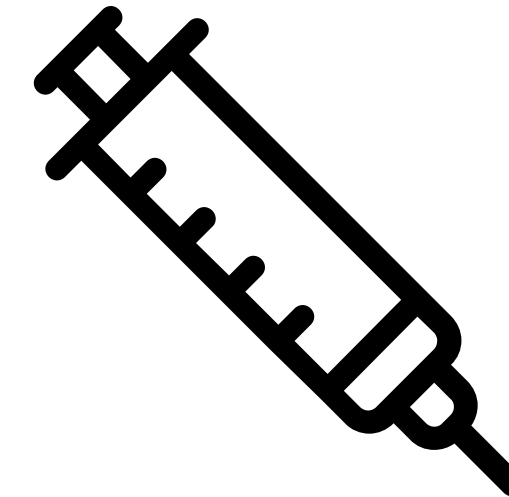
# SIGNS & SYMPTOMS (BENZO OD)



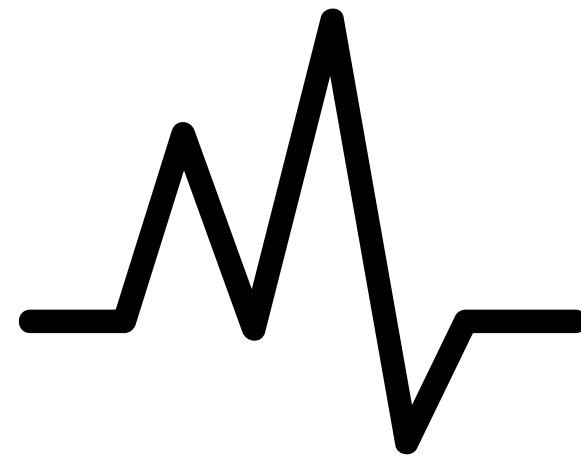
**EXTREME DROWZINESS**



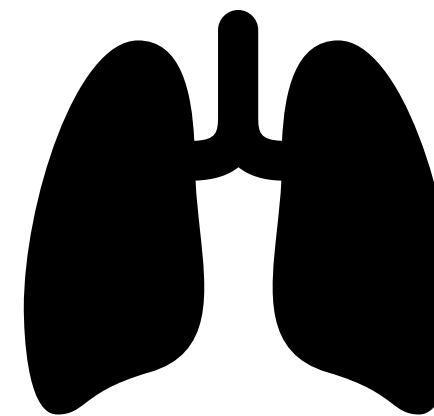
**DIZZINESS,  
UNCOORDINATION**



**NOT WAKING AFTER  
NALOXONE**



**SLOW PULSE**



**SNORING/ VERY SLOW  
BREATHING**



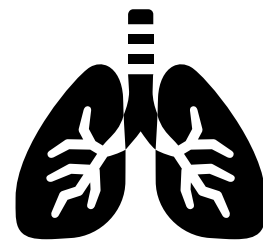


# BENZO OD RESPONSE

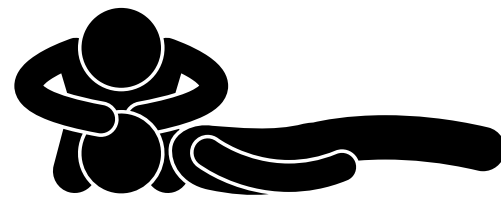
FOLLOW SAVE ME STEPS



STIMULATE,  
call 911



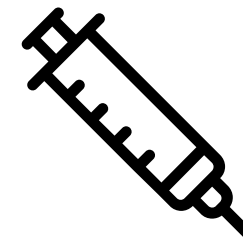
AIRWAY



VENTILATE



EVALUATE



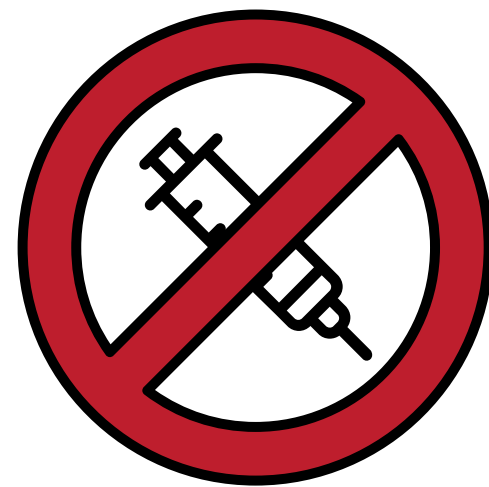
MEDICATION



EVALUATE

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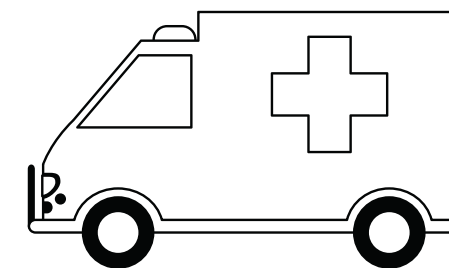
IF BREATHING MORE THAN ONCE EVERY 5 SEC



STOP  
NALOXONE



RECOVERY POSITION



AWAIT AMBULANCE

# BENZO WITHDRAWAL

- Headache, aching skin, feeling emotional, intense irritability, restlessness, anxiety, panic attacks, nausea, muscle twitching.
- Similar to opioid withdrawal, but not improved by OAT

- 
- Severe withdrawal can lead to seizures or death
  - Needs medical detox



**Q U E S T I O N S ?**



OverdoseResponse@vch.ca

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**THANK YOU!**