Fentanyl has been found in many substances across Northern Nova Scotia.

Always test before you use.

IN CASE OF OVERDOSE

Call 911 immediately

- Give Naloxone
- Place the person in the recovery position
- Stay until help arrives

If you must leave, unlock the door so emergency responders can enter.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

The Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act protects people who call for help during an overdose, including the person experiencing an overdose.

You are protected from:

- Charges for simple possession
- Some conditions related to parole or probation

NHCS offers fentanyl test strips, naloxone kits and training, as well as a variety of other harm reduction supplies and education.

NHCS also provides emergency bags through participating pharmacies for people who use substances and who missed NHCS office hours.

Each bag contains a limited quantity of supplies, including:

- 10 syringes
- 5 sterile water ampoules
- 10 alcohol swabs
- 1 tie
- 2 filters

Emergency bags are discreetly packaged, free of charge, and available with no questions asked.

Thank you to the 35 participating pharmacies for supporting this initiative. Contact NHCS for a complete list of participating locations, and we can help you find the pharmacy nearest you.

Northern Healthy Connections Society
25 Revere
Truro, NS
On-site: (902) 895-0931
Mobile Outreach: 902-956-3965
nhcsociety.ca

Fentanyl Testing



WHAT IS FENTANYL?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid used for pain relief. It can be up to 100 times stronger than other opioids (e.g. heroin, morphine, hydromorphone).

It has no taste or smell and is often mixed into other substances without people knowing.

Even a small amount can be fatal. Many overdoses happen because people do not know their drugs contain fentanyl.

Over 50,000 people in Canada have died from opioid-related toxicity since 2016 (Government of Canada, 2025). This crisis is driven by an unpredictable drug supply contaminated with fentanyl and other substances.

KNOW THE LIMITS OF TEST STRIPS

- Test strips may detect fentanyl or similar drugs (analogues)
- Fentanyl may not be evenly mixed in a substance
- A negative result does not guarantee safety
- Always test before every use

HOW TO TEST FOR FENTANYL / FENTANYL ANALOGUES

Step 1:
Get fentanyl test strips from a harm reduction organisation (see back page for options).

Step 2:
Before testing, crush your substance into a fine powder. Mix it well (shake or stir) so fentanyl, if present, is evenly distributed.

Step 3:
Clean and disinfect a flat surface with an alcohol swab to perform the test. Wash your hands with soap before touching any equipment.

Step 4:
In a small container (like a Stericup or bottle cap):

- Add a small amount of the substance (about a grain of salt)
- Mix with 1 oz (30 mL) of water
- Stir well

Step 5:
Open the test strip package. Hold the strip by the blue end only. Do not touch the white end.

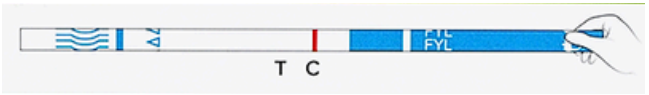
Step 6:
Dip the white end with the wavy blue lines into the liquid. Do not go past the blue line. Wait at least 30 seconds.

Step 7:
Remove the strip and wait for up to 5 minutes for the result.

Repeat these steps with every use, using a new test strip each time!

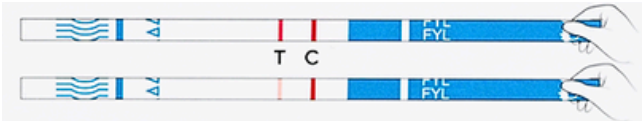
HOW TO READ RESULTS

POSITIVE
(fentanyl detected)



1 line (control line only)

NEGATIVE



2 lines (control + test line, even if faint)

INVALID/ INCONCLUSIVE



Test line only or no lines
→ Test again if possible

STAY SAFER EVERY TIME

Start low, go slow. Start with a small amount & wait between doses
Consider snorting or smoking instead of injecting (lower overdose risk)
Never use alone. Have someone with you who can respond to an overdose If you are alone, call the National Overdose Response Service (NORS) 1-888-688-6677 (24/7).
Carry Naloxone. You can get a kit & training from a local harm reduction organisation or pharmacy.