

Drug & Alcohol Education Newsletter

McLeod County Medication Disposal Program

FREE!

**Take It To
THE BOX**

Safe Use • Safe Storage • Safe Disposal

- Over-the-counter and prescribed medications accepted
- Leave the medicine in its original container, with the name of the medication visible. Cross off personal information.



DROP BOX LOCATIONS:

McLeod County Sheriff's Office
801 East 10th St., Glencoe
Available 24/7

Hutchinson Police Dept.
10 Franklin St. South, Hutchinson
Available 7 a.m - 11 p.m.

Winsted Police Dept.
201 1st St. North, Winsted
Available 24/7

Fentanyl Test Strips to Prevent Drug Overdose

What are fentanyl test strips?

Fentanyl test strips (FTS) are a form of drug testing technology which have shown to be effective at detecting the presence of fentanyl in drug samples prior to use. Fentanyl is a

powerful synthetic opioid that is used medically to treat severe pain, and illicitly manufactured fentanyl is driving an increase in drug overdose deaths both nationally and in Minnesota. In Minnesota, overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids, including fentanyl and fentanyl analogues, increased 81% (298 to 539 deaths) from 2019 to 2020. As of July 2021, FTS are no longer within the definition of “drug paraphernalia” in Minnesota and are thus legal to possess, carry, and distribute. Learn more here: Minnesota Statute 152.01, Subd. 18 (b) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/152.01>)

Public health benefits of fentanyl test strips

FTS are a reliable, common-sense means of providing people at risk of fentanyl exposure with more information that can help decrease risk of overdose. Because FTS access is new, scientific evidence is only just beginning to emerge. An evaluation of FTS use in San Francisco found they promote increased fentanyl awareness and lead people to take safety precautions to prevent overdose if fentanyl is detected. A study involving a community-based FTS distribution program in North Carolina found that 81% of those with access to FTS routinely tested their drugs before use. Those with a positive test result were five times more likely to change their drug use behavior to reduce the risk of overdose. In a

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Rhode Island study of young adults who reported using heroin, cocaine, or illicitly obtained prescription pills, “receiving a positive [fentanyl] result was significantly associated with reporting a positive change in overdose risk behavior.”

How to use fentanyl test strips

In order to use fentanyl test strips: 1. Dissolve a small amount of drug supply in water, and then dip the test strip into the liquid for 15 seconds. Because the test strips are highly sensitive, a minimal amount of drug residue is sufficient to obtain a result. 2. Set the test strip on a flat surface until results appear, typically within 5 minutes. 3. One line indicates fentanyl is present in the sample; two lines indicate a negative result.

Scan this QR code to watch a video on how to use fentanyl test strips:



A 2018 study jointly conducted by researchers at Brown University, Boston Medical Center, and Johns Hopkins University in collaboration with law enforcement agencies sought to validate the efficacy of FTS for use in detecting fentanyl in drug samples. The study found

that the test strips were accurate at detecting fentanyl when it was present in samples of street drugs provided by law enforcement, and unlikely to produce false negative results.

FTS have some known limitations. They do not measure the quantity or potency of fentanyl present in a drug sample. There is also emerging evidence that FTS may be cross-reactive with methamphetamine and that when methamphetamine drug samples are tested for fentanyl contamination, the sample should be diluted in a greater amount of water (about half a cup) to produce accurate results.

Accessing fentanyl test strips in Minnesota

FTS are now legal to possess, carry, and distribute in Minnesota and are an important tool to prevent drug overdose. To learn more about FTS and where you can access them for free in Minnesota, please contact the MDH Drug Overdose Prevention Unit by email at health.drugodprev@state.mn.us.

More drug overdose prevention strategies

For people who use drugs, FTS should be considered one ‘tool’ in the ‘toolbox’ of effective drug overdose prevention strategies. Remember to also:

- Connect with your local Syringe



POWER of PARENTS

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Services Program

- Carry naloxone
- Teach those around you to use & carry naloxone
- Do not use alone
- Have a safety plan for every time you use

Minnesota Department of Health
 Drug Overdose Prevention Unit
 85 East 7th Place
 PO Box 64882
 St. Paul, MN 55164
 health.drugodprev@state.mn.us
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/opioids/index.html>

Mental Illness and Substance Use in Young Adults

Entering adulthood can be an emotional time, but sometimes the ups and downs can mean something more.

Millions of young adults are living with a mental or substance use disorder and many either do not realize they have one or are not paying attention to the signs and not seeking help. In fact, of the 8.9 million young adults who reported having a mental illness in 2018, more than 2 in 5 went untreated and of the 5.1 million with a substance use disorder, nearly 9 in 10 did not get treatment.

It is important to remember that asking for help is a normal part of life, and you should never feel like you have to take on the world alone. If

you are concerned that you or someone in your life may be drinking too much, using drugs, or dealing with mental illness, there are resources available to help.


View and share [audio and video files](#), and [other resources](#).

Entering Adulthood: Getting Help for Mental and Substance Use Disorders

The big life changes that 18-to-25-year-olds experience when transitioning into adulthood come with a range of emotions. While it can sometimes feel like you're the only one going through ups and downs, **you're not alone**.

	8.8 million young adults reported having a mental illness		42% of those with mental illness went untreated
	5.1 million young adults reported having a substance use disorder		87% of those with substance use disorders went untreated

Common Signs

	Trouble sleeping or oversleeping		Loss of interest in hobbies + friends		Feelings of anxiousness
	Changes in overall energy levels		Changes in appetite + weight		Feelings of hopelessness
	Difficulty in daily functioning		Extreme mood changes		Thoughts of suicide

It's okay to ask for help.
 Visit [SAMHSA.gov/young-adults](https://www.samhsa.gov/young-adults) or call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) for treatment referral.

SAMHSA
 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4737) • 1-800-487-4869 (TDD) • www.samhsa.gov

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What is fentanyl?

It's an extremely dangerous synthetic opioid commonly mixed into other drugs. Even a dose as small as three grains of salt can be deadly, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A WORRYING TREND

For at least the past two decades, data showed that boys and young men were more likely to drink than girls and young women. However, an unsettling trend has taken hold: Data now show that girls and young women, ages 12 to 20, are drinking more alcohol than their male counterparts.

Alcohol use by people under the legal drinking age of 21 has decreased over the past few decades, but the decreases were more pronounced for males than for females. In 2020, more girls and young women reported past-month alcohol use than boys and young men.

What is behind this trend? Here are some facts that organizations and those working in prevention should know as they design strategies to curb harmful drinking behaviors among girls and young women.

Mental Health Affects Underage Drinking
Evidence suggests that problems with anxiety and depression are increasing among adolescents, particularly young women. Girls and young women can be more susceptible to internalizing stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. This, in turn, may make them more likely to drink as a way to cope. In fact, when girls have high levels of anxiety, they are more likely than boys to use alcohol, and to do so at earlier ages. Helping girls and young women handle difficult emotions in healthy ways may help them reduce their consumption of alcohol or avoid it altogether.

Because of the association between underage drinking and mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety, girls and young women who have these challenges need

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strong underage drinking prevention support coupled with general mental health support.

Alcohol Increases the Risk of Certain Health Problems

Girls and young women differ biologically from boys and young men. Females tend to have less water in their bodies than males of the same weight, so the alcohol they drink becomes more concentrated in their blood, where it then travels to the brain. Other gender-specific physical risks faced by girls and young women who use alcohol include:

Increased risk of memory problems.

Compared with boys, girls' memories are more likely to be affected negatively by drinking. Girls and young women are more likely to experience memory impairments from alcohol, such as alcohol-induced blackouts. Furthermore, girls and young women who report binge drinking show less brain activity and worse performance on memory tests than peers who either drink a little or abstain. Boys and young men do not show the same outcomes.

A greater risk for long-term health consequences.

Females are more susceptible than males to experiencing long-term health consequences like alcohol-induced liver inflammation and liver cancer, as well as cardiovascular disease. Drinking alcohol, even in girls and young women, contributes to future breast cancer. Among adult women, even one drink per day

has been linked to a 5 to 9 percent higher chance of developing breast cancer compared to those who abstain from using alcohol.

Organizations and Communities Like Yours Can Help

Prevention works when we work together! National and community-based organizations play crucial roles in helping girls and young women avoid the harms caused by underage drinking. By educating young people and adults about the risks and consequences of alcohol use, we can work to continue the downward trend and address gender patterns of underage drinking and risky alcohol use.

Parents and other caring adults play an important role in young people's decisions to consume alcohol, so it is imperative that adults support girls and young women as they work to protect their mental and physical health. SAMHSA's Prevention and Treatment of Anxiety, Depression, and Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among College Students, and the HHS Office on Women's Health and Girls Health websites have information to help caring adults navigate the mental health challenges girls and young women face as they transition to adulthood. Likewise, SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You." substance use prevention campaign and the Drug Enforcement Administration's publication "Growing Up Drug Free" have resources to help adults start and continue conversations about alcohol use with children, teens, and young adults.






Know the Risks of Marijuana

Marijuana use comes with real risks that can impact a person's health and life.


- Marijuana is the most commonly used illegal substance in the U.S. and its use is growing. Marijuana use among all adult age groups, both sexes, and pregnant women is going up. At the same time, the perception of how harmful marijuana use can be is declining. Increasingly, young people today do not consider marijuana use a risky behavior.
- But there are real risks for people who use marijuana, especially youth and young adults, and women who are pregnant or nursing. Today's marijuana is stronger than ever before. People can and do become addicted to marijuana.
- **Approximately 1 in 10 people who use marijuana will become addicted. When they start before age 18, the rate of addiction rises to 1 in 6.**

Marijuana Risks

- Marijuana use can have negative and long-term effects:

-  **Brain health:** Marijuana can cause permanent IQ loss of as much as 8 points when people start using it at a young age. These IQ points do not come back, even after quitting marijuana.
-  **Mental health:** Studies link marijuana use to depression, anxiety, suicide planning, and psychotic episodes. It is not known, however, if marijuana use is the cause of these conditions.
-  **Athletic Performance:** Research shows that marijuana affects timing, movement, and coordination, which can harm athletic performance.
-  **Driving:** People who drive under the influence of marijuana can experience dangerous effects: slower reactions, lane weaving, decreased coordination, and difficulty reacting to signals and sounds on the road.
-  **Baby's health and development:** Marijuana use during pregnancy may cause fetal growth restriction, premature birth, stillbirth, and problems with brain development, resulting in hyperactivity and poor cognitive function. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and other chemicals from marijuana can also be passed from a mother to her baby through breast milk, further impacting a child's healthy development.

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-  **Daily life:** Using marijuana can affect performance and how well people do in life. Research shows that people who use marijuana are more likely to have relationship problems, worse educational outcomes, lower career achievement, and reduced life satisfaction.

Marijuana Addiction

Contrary to popular belief, marijuana is addictive. Research shows that:

- 1-in-6 people who start using the drug before the age of 18 can become addicted.
- 1-in-10 adults who use the drug can become addicted.

Over the past few decades, the amount of THC in marijuana has steadily climbed; today's marijuana has three times the concentration of THC compared to 25 years ago. The higher the THC amount, the stronger the effects on the brain—likely contributing to increased rates of marijuana-related emergency room visits. While there is no research yet on how higher potency affects the long-term risks of marijuana use, more THC is likely to lead to higher rates of dependency and addiction.

About Marijuana

Marijuana refers to the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the *Cannabis sativa* or

Cannabis indica plant. Marijuana is a psychoactive drug that contains close to 500 chemicals, including THC, a mind-altering compound that causes harmful health effects.

People smoke marijuana in hand-rolled cigarettes, in pipes or water pipes, in blunts, and by using vaporizers that pull THC from the marijuana. Marijuana can also be mixed in food (edibles), such as brownies, cookies, and candy, or brewed as a tea. People also smoke or eat different forms of marijuana extracts, which deliver a large amount of THC and can be potentially more dangerous.

Rise of Marijuana Use

Today, marijuana use is on the rise among all adult age groups, both sexes, and pregnant women. People ages 18-25 have the highest rate of use.

Marijuana and THC remain illegal at the federal level, even though many states have legalized its use. In states where legal, marijuana is a fast-growing industry with sales to individuals over 21 in retail stores, wineries, breweries, coffee shops, dispensaries, online, as well as grown at home.