



Thank you for choosing to have your drugs checked by UBCO's Harm Reduction Team (HaRT)! This document explains how to collect and package your sample and has some helpful information. We look forward to telling you what we find!

**To contact us, text or call our phone (250 -864-1431) or e-mail us (ubcohart@gmail.com).** Please note our phone is checked Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. You can follow us (*Facebook: @UBCOVOICE | Instagram: @campushealthubco | Twitter: @UBCOHealth*) for service updates and to see what we are finding in drugs. [Also - we're hiring!](#)

### **Packaging Your Drug Sample:**

If this is confusing, bring us your sample however you have it, and we'll help you package it. We also provide supplies for this! Be safe when collecting a sample by packaging it in a safe place (e.g., where other people will not accidentally consume your substance like in a shared kitchen) and using protective equipment as needed (e.g., gloves, glasses).

1. Collect the sample — a sample needs to be about the size of a grain of rice
2. Place the sample in the middle of a small (ex. 2"x2") piece of tinfoil, and fold so that the sample will not spill out
3. Place the foil square into a small plastic bag, and seal the bag
4. Place the bag into an envelope, along with the completed Sample Collection Form (located on page 2 here), and seal the envelope.
5. During service hours, you can come to the location, or text/call our phone and a team member will meet you to collect your sample. Outside of service hours, contact our phone and we will assist you in getting your sample to us for checking.

### **Harm Reduction Service Hours**

#### **Vernon (Tuesdays)**

- **11:00am - 3:00pm:** Vernon Downtown Mental Health and Substance Use (3306A 32nd Ave, 250-503-3737)
- Contact Mental Health & Substance Use to ask about dropping samples outside of hours

#### **Kelowna (Wednesdays)**

- **10am - 1pm:** UBCO (3333 University Way)
- **2pm - 6pm:** Living Positive Resource Centre (255 Lawrence Ave., 778-753-5830, info@lprc.ca)
- Contact LPRC to ask about dropping samples outside of service hours

#### **Penticton (Fridays)**

- **10am - 3pm:** The Centre (inside the Cannery, 1475 Fairview Road)
- Samples can also be dropped off throughout the week at: The Centre (Mon - Fri 10-4), Burdock House (24/7, 594 Winnipeg St, 236-422-1601), or Compass House (24/7, 1706 Main St.)

### **Helpful Resources**

- [Lifeguard App](#)
- Alcohol and Drug Information Referral Service: 1-800-663-1441
- [UBC's Student Recovery Community](#)
- <https://drugchecking.ca>

## Sample Collection Form (1 per sample)

Ensure you have consent to collect information, including that the person is okay receiving their results via the selected method. Contact information is not stored with drug checking results, it is destroyed for confidentiality.

<b>Date this sample was bought:</b>	<b>Where sample was bought:</b>  <i>(e.g., Kelowna, Vernon)</i>	<b>What sample was bought as:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Fentanyl <input type="checkbox"/> Meth <input type="checkbox"/> Cocaine <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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**Have you already used this substance?**

Yes (post-use)
  No (pre-use)
  Not applicable

**This is used drug paraphernalia (e.g., pipes, cookers):**

Yes
  No

**Important notes** (*e.g., did you have a weird reaction, did this result in an overdose, anything else unexpected?*). This can help us know when we need to put out a drug alert about dangerous drugs.

  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  

**How would you like your results?** (select one of the below options)

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Email:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Phone call</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Phone text</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Through friend/agency</b>
	<b>Number:</b>	<b>Name:</b>  <b>Contact</b> (email/phone number - indicate to text or call):

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY** **Sample ID:**

Sample Description:

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Drug Checking

- **Protecting your information:**
  - we don't share your information with anybody! We use information from the sample collection form to collect data on the kinds of drugs that are circulating. This information helps us know when to put out a dangerous drug alert, and can provide information for other helpful tools in the future! We shred these sheets after each drug-checking session.
- **Getting your sample to us:**
  - you can drop by our locations during service hours, or give us a call/text if you can't get to those locations during our service hours and we'll work with you to figure out how we can collect your sample.
- **Where to get supplies to package your sample:**
  - If you don't have supplies to package your sample (tin foil, baggies, envelope, sample collection form) we're happy to provide these for you. Either call/text ahead or we can provide you with a sample collection package!
- **How we check your sample:**
  - we use a Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR) machine alongside fentanyl test strips (FTS) and benzodiazepine test strips (BTS). The machine can tell us approximate percentages of what's in a sample, as long as it's a concentration of 5-10% or more. This means if there's a very small amount of something, it might not show up on the FTIR. That's why we use FTS and BTS - these drugs can be present in small amounts and still be dangerous. Test strips are more sensitive, and can't tell us a percentage, but can tell us whether these substances are present.
- **How long it takes to check your sample:**
  - It can take up to 30 minutes to analyze a sample. We provide results by the end of the day, however, if you would like your sample checked and to receive your results earlier, notify the team and we'll do everything we can to get that information to you quickly.
- **Limitations/the "Chocolate Chip Cookie Effect":**
  - When we receive a sample, it's important to remember it doesn't reflect the entire substance. It's sort of like when you break off a piece of a chocolate chip cookie - the piece you break off might have chocolate, and it might not. Drugs don't have an even distribution of fillers and main ingredients, so even though we don't find fentanyl in a sample, it might still be in the substance.
- **Getting used paraphernalia checked:**

- We can also analyze used paraphernalia – used cookers can be sent for processing if they are dry and have a sample size worth of residue. Cookers can be placed directly into the zipper-sealed plastic bag.
- **Other kinds of samples:**
  - We cannot check organic materials (weed, mushrooms) or liquids normally, but we want to help however we can, so reach out and we'll see what we can do.

### The Team

- **Who we are:**
  - the Harm Reduction Team is part of UBCO's Campus Health department. We've partnered with Harm Reduction Specialists from Interior Health to offer these services. The team that delivers these services is led by a Campus Health Specialist and Doctoral student in Nursing (Lauren). We have two drug checking technicians - Thomas is a third year nursing student, and Katie is a Registered Nurse. We also have three Harm Reduction Specialists - Jon (third year nursing student), Becky (master of social work student), and Lucas (third year psychology student and president of UBCO's students for sensible drug policy). In addition, we have a community volunteer (Sean, Registered Nurse) and countless community partners (Living Positive Resource Centre, Kelowna Action Network of Drug Users, Community Action Team, Foundry, South Okanagan Women In Need Society, and more).
- **What else we can offer:**
  - we provide sterilized supplies at request, information on lower-risk partying, how to support loved ones who struggle with substance use, overdose awareness and prevention, naloxone training and kits, smoking cessation support information and resources, and many other harm reduction resources!

### Want to help HaRt grow?

We're always open to donations to help keep our services running. If you would like to support our team in any way, please contact us at [campushealth.ubco@ubc.ca](mailto:campushealth.ubco@ubc.ca) or [ubcoheart@gmail.com](mailto:ubcoheart@gmail.com) If you want to donate specific supplies, see below for a list of things we always need.

Items we use regularly:

- Alcohol swabs
- Medical gloves
- Small medicine cups
- Medical masks
- Envelopes
- Petrol for travel
- Fentanyl test strips

- Benzodiazepine test strips



# HaRT UBCO'S HARM REDUCTION + DRUG CHECKING TEAM

Image credit: David Byres