

## Street drug associated with a heightened risk of overdose

**Amos, March 9, 2021** – The Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue is urging users of street drugs to be extra vigilant. A new dangerous and potentially fatal drug called “purp” or “purple” has recently appeared on the streets in Quebec. The fentanyl-laced heroin comes in the form of a purple powder and can cause potentially fatal overdoses.

### Precautions

“It is crucial that users not use this drug alone and that they not all use it at the same time when they are in a group. Users who want to try new drugs should start with small doses, as the drugs may contain other substances,” warns Dr. Omobola Sobanjo, public health specialist working for the Direction de santé publique (DSPu).

In addition, “users should always have naloxone on hand when using this type of substance,” says Dr. Sobanjo.

Naloxone can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, but it must be used correctly and, most importantly, it must be administered quickly as soon as a person shows signs of an overdose (e.g. unresponsiveness to noise or pain, difficulty breathing or loss of consciousness).

Naloxone is available free of charge in all pharmacies in the region and through community workers.

In the event of an overdose, remember to call 911 immediately. According to the Civil Code, the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act offers legal protection to people who call for help in the event of an overdose, even if they are in possession of drugs when emergency services arrive. So, don't be afraid to ask for help if things go wrong.

Lastly, let us remind you that the CISSS de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue offers addiction services: [Drugs, Alcohol and Pathological Gambling - CISSS – ABITIBI TÉMISCAMINGUE \(gouv.qc.ca\)](https://www.gouv.qc.ca/les-services/abus-de-substances)

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### Information:

08\_cissat\_communications@ssss.gouv.qc.ca