



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Chair and Members, Hamilton Board of Health Mayor and Members, City Council
DATE:	March 6, 2026
SUBJECT:	Drug Alert – On-Going High Numbers of Paramedic Responses to Drug Poisonings in Hamilton (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Melissa Biksa Director, Epidemiology and Wellness Hamilton Public Health
SIGNATURE:	

This communication is to notify you that Hamilton Public Health issued a Drug Alert to community partners on March 6, 2026. Hamilton Public Health collaborates with community partners in monitoring surveillance data and qualitative reports from community providers about patterns of drug toxicity in the unregulated drug supply.

Drug Alerts are issued when Hamilton Public Health receives information about concerning trends in the community or a risk that has been identified with circulating substances. The goal of a Drug Alert is to notify community partners and protect members in the community who may be using unregulated substances from additional risk through encouraging them to take additional precautionary measures when consuming substances.

March 6, 2026 – Drug Alert: On-Going High Numbers of Paramedic Responses to Drug Poisonings in Hamilton

Since January 2026, persistent high numbers of paramedic responses to overdoses in Hamilton point to ongoing high risk in the community.

- High risk of opioid drugs contaminated with benzodiazepines and medetomidine causing heavy sedation, and reduced response to Naloxone; and,
- Reports of Crystal meth drugs contaminated with fentanyl, increasing the risk of unexpected opioid poisoning.

To view the Drug Alert – March 6, 2026, please visit the link below:

[On-going High Numbers of Paramedic Responses to Drug Poisonings in Hamilton | City of Hamilton](https://www.hamilton.ca/alert/going-high-numbers-paramedic-responses-drug-poisonings-hamilton)

(<https://www.hamilton.ca/alert/going-high-numbers-paramedic-responses-drug-poisonings-hamilton>)

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Information about Hamilton Public Health community programs and services can be found at the link below:

[Harm Reduction Services | City of Hamilton](https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/public-health/alcohol-drugs-gambling/harm-reduction-services)

(<https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/public-health/alcohol-drugs-gambling/harm-reduction-services>)

An alert poster is attached as Appendix “A” for distribution.

If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact Melissa Biksa, Director, Epidemiology & Wellbeing Division, Hamilton Public Health at Ext. 6709 or melissa.biksa@hamilton.ca.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Board of Health Communication Update (2026-03-06) Drug Alert – On-Going High Numbers of Paramedic Responses to Drug Poisonings in Hamilton