

HYGIENE RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS & ALCOHOL DURING COVID-19



People who use drugs and alcohol are at a bigger risk of becoming sick during the COVID-19 pandemic for many reasons. One important reason is that unsafe hygiene practices connected to using drugs and alcohol can quickly increase the spread of the disease.

Frontline workers can thus play a critical role in promoting safer health practices.

What to know about Hygiene:

People who use drugs can lower their risk of getting and spreading COVID-19 by:



- Carrying soap with them.



- Wiping down surfaces with **antimicrobial wipes** before preparing drugs (or at least preparing them on clean pieces of foil).



- Wiping down drug packages, sinks, doorknobs, and any other surfaces that hands can touch.

- Washing hands with soap and water **for at least 20 seconds** before preparing drugs (or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if nothing else).



- Making sure that if someone else is preparing their drugs, that that person cleans their hands thoroughly too.



- Not sharing drugs or supplies (like cigarettes, vapes, bongs, joints, or nasal tubes).

- Not placing supplies like tourniquets or syringes in their mouths.

- If sharing happens, wiping down mouthpieces with alcohol swabs.

- Putting used equipment in biohazard containers or bags, so it's clear they've been used.



Antimicrobial wipes are ethyl-alcohol based wipes that are at least 60% alcohol or that contain bleach.



People who use alcohol can lower their risk of getting and spreading COVID-19 by:

- Not sharing liquor or beer bottles (or cans) with others.
- If sharing happens, wiping down mouthpieces with alcohol swabs.

How can frontline workers help?

- **Knowledge is safety.** Share what you know, if you have the opportunity.
- **Carry extra supplies if possible.** For example, gloves, wipes, masks, soap, and biohazard bags.
- **Encourage people who feel sick to stay away from others.** Find out what their essential needs are and figure out ways to bring them what they need.

For more information, visit pmhp.ucla.edu/guides