



The Regional Municipality of Durham Health Department

News Release

Durham Region Health Department warns residents about street drugs resembling Xanax

Whitby, Ontario, March 1, 2018 – Durham Region Health Department has been notified that eight Durham Region youth have recently required treatment related to the use of an unknown substance that resembled Xanax. Xanax, also known as Alprazolam, is commonly prescribed by physicians to treat anxiety and panic disorders.

A report indicates that the eight youth under 18-years old experienced signs and symptoms of overdose including agitation, hypertension, tachycardia, psychosis and seizures. Residents are reminded that drugs not received from a pharmacy may contain other substances and increase the risk of adverse events or overdose.

Parents are urged to talk to their teens about the dangers of taking street drugs, which can also look like prescription drugs, as well as the dangers of taking prescription drugs not prescribed to them.

The Health Department is working closely with local schools and school boards to alert staff, students and families about the recent event. As part of its regular mandate, the Health Department continues to work with school communities on drug prevention strategies and provides information on treatment options for those seeking help.

Below are some actions you can take to reduce the availability of prescription drugs on the streets:

- Keep medication out of sight in a locked cabinet.
- Never share medication.
- Take unused medication to your pharmacy for free and safe disposal.
- Share this information with others.

If someone you know overdoses:

1. Call 911
2. Stay with the person until paramedics arrive and provide paramedics with a sample of the drug, if possible.

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For more information about how to talk to your teens about drugs or to access health information, please visit durham.ca/health or connect with the Health Department at twitter.com/durhamhealth or facebook.com/durhamregionhealth.

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If this information is required in an accessible format, please call 1-800-841-2729 ext. 3094