

# Public Health Madison and Dane County: Overdose Spike Alert issued due to increase in suspected drug overdose activity

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Public Health Madison & Dane County is issuing a public health alert due to an increase, or spike, in suspected drug overdose activity in our community. The alert is based on ambulance and hospital data that shows more than double the number of drug-involved overdoses than what we usually see daily in our community.

“The primary mission of Public Health as a whole is to protect the health and wellbeing of all people, including those who use drugs,” said Julia Olsen, Public Health Supervisor. “The faster we can get this information to people who use drugs and their families, the better chance we have at saving lives.”

The [Overdose Spike Alert](#) system launched in late 2021. The program established an estimate of the expected or “normal” number of suspected drug-involved overdose cases per day in Dane County. Public Health staff monitor hospital, police, and ambulance data daily to identify unexpected increase, or spikes, and send out the alert as soon as possible.

The alert system has now expanded to allow subscribers to choose to get alerts sent directly to their phone through a text message, in addition to the email option.

“We don’t always know exactly what is driving up a spike in overdoses, it could be

that the make-up of drugs in our community changed, or that Fentanyl or other substances are being mixed in,” said Olsen. “When it is available, the alert will include information about what’s causing the increase so people can be as safe as possible”

This notice should serve as a notice to recognize the signs of an overdose, always call 911 if you suspect someone is overdosing, avoid using street [drugs alone](#), carry [Narcan](#), and get safer supplies through the [Public Health Syringe Services Program](#).

“All lives have value. So, if we can empower just one person through these alerts to actions that keep themselves and others safe and alive, we have fulfilled our mission,” said Olsen.

Sign up to receive future Overdose Spike Alerts at [publichealthmdc.com/SpikeAlerts](http://publichealthmdc.com/SpikeAlerts). There you can find additional resources, including information about treatment and recovery options and a brochure and poster to display in an effort to help share this information more widely with community members.