



RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE POLICIES TO facilitate use of straws for safer snorting of drugs



DISTRIBUTE SUPPLIES

- Straws in a variety of colours
- Based on the quantity requested by clients with no limits

EDUCATE

- Educate about:
 - safer use of straws
 - proper disposal of used straws
 - safer snorting practices
 - risks of sharing straws and purpose of straws in different colours
 - overdose prevention practices

DISPOSE

- Dispose used straws in accordance with local regulations for biomedical waste

RISKS

- Blood residues and nasal secretions with HCV can remain on used straws
- Transmission may occur when straws contaminated with HCV are used by more than one person
- Rigid or sharp edges on snorting equipment may cause small cuts/tears in the nose that can bleed
- HIV and/or HBV can potentially be transmitted via blood-to-blood contact if contaminated snorting equipment is shared
- Using rolled banknotes (e.g., dollar bills) to snort drugs may lead to bacterial and fungal infections
- Banknotes can be a reservoirs for antibiotic-resistant bacteria, such as MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)
- Long term cocaine snorting can damage the structure of the nose and damage the septum (the bony/cartilage wall dividing the nasal cavities)
- Crushed drugs can cause irritation of the inner lining of the nose
- Although uncommon, snorting drugs can lead to serious lung infections

BEHAVIORS

- Sharing snorting equipment is common
- Using dollar bill, key or spoon to snort drugs is common
- Awareness of the risks of HCV transmission from sharing straws or rolled banknotes is low