

Using Benzo Test Strips for Drug Checking Step-By-Step Guide

Benzo test strips can identify the presence of benzos in drug samples, but the strips may not return accurate results if used incorrectly. We recommend the following procedure to get the most accurate results possible.

Recommended Procedure

1. Add one grain of sample (about 2 mg) to the plastic tube. We use 2mL tubes with lids.
2. Fill the tube with water, leaving enough space to close the lid.
3. Close the tube.
4. Shake for 30 seconds to make the drugs dissolve.
5. Dip the benzo test strip in the water taking care not to dip too deep (less than 2 cm).
6. Wait 2 full minutes before reading the results. 1 line = positive; 2 lines = negative
7. Pour the contents of the tube into a small paper cup and dilute with 30 mL of water to do the fentanyl test strip.

Why do we recommend shaking in water?

- Benzos do not dissolve easily in water so shaking the solution helps the drug dissolve.

Tips

- Benzo strips take longer to work than fentanyl strips. Waiting a full 2 minutes ensures the lines have time to properly develop.
- If no tube is available, use only a small splash of water (2–5 mL) in the cup and swirl for 30 seconds or stir with a clean tool for 30 seconds. Be careful though, as the result may not be as accurate as if it was shaken.
- To save time, do the fentanyl check while waiting the 2 minutes for the benzo test.

Remember

- Benzo test lines can be very faint so read the strip results under bright light. Any second line, no matter how faint, means the test is negative.
- Benzo test strips cannot determine concentration or what type of benzo is present in the sample.

Important information to share when giving a positive result:

- The drugs likely contain benzos, but we cannot say which or how much.
- Be extra careful if you plan to use these drugs.
- Using opioids and benzos together increases the risk of overdose.
- We recommend:
 - Use your drugs at an OPS.
 - Start with less and go slow. Do a tester shot first.
 - Use naloxone in case of opioid overdose but note that naloxone is not effective for benzo overdoses. Call 911 if an overdose occurs.
- Questions? Contact drugchecking@bccsu.ubc.ca