

## Contact information

### CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest outpatient services – Mental health and addiction programs

- **Candiac**  
450-619-6009
- **Granby**  
450-375-0022
- **Longueuil**  
450-651-3113
- **Montréal** (English-language services)  
514-486-1304
- **Saint-Hubert**  
450-443-2100
- **Saint-Hyacinthe**  
450-771-6622
- **Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu**  
450-348-1600
- **Salaberry-de-Valleyfield**  
450-373-5934
- **Sorel-Tracy**  
450-746-1226



### Our mission

To maintain, improve, and restore the health and well-being of the Québec population by making accessible an array of integrated and quality health and social services, while contributing to the social and economic development of Québec.

### Our vision

Accessible and efficient health care and services that adapt to the needs of Québécois.

### Our goals

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest achieves its goals through its innovative approaches and stands apart through:

- its exemplary offer of care and integrated services based on interdisciplinarity, accessibility, and adaptability to the needs of its population;
- its willingness to question and improve its professional, clinical, and administrative practices;
- its appreciation of its personnel and the implementation of human resource management practices;
- its strong relationships with its partners.

### Our values

Our actions are guided by five equal and interconnected values:

- Compassion;
- Collaboration;
- Commitment;
- Confidence;
- Consistency.

## WITHDRAWAL: ALCOHOL, GHB, BENZODIAZEPINES

What you need to know



[www.santemo.quebec](http://www.santemo.quebec)

Centre intégré  
de santé  
et de services sociaux  
de la Montérégie-Ouest

Québec 

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Québec 

You've decided to make a change in your life, and we wish to take the opportunity to congratulate you on this decision.

Results from your assessment recommend that you undergo detoxification at a hospital or at a detox facility for your own safety.

Here's some valuable information you should know to ensure your safety and well-being before undergoing your medical assessment at the hospital or before being admitted to our inpatient detox facilities.

## What is withdrawal?

The human body seeks balance. If you suddenly stop using alcohol, GHB or benzodiazepines, such as Ativan, Rivotril, Xanax or Valium (central nervous system depressants), your nervous system immediately goes into overdrive, which can cause physical withdrawal symptoms.

These withdrawal symptoms can be a major health risk and can develop into auditory or visual hallucinations, seizures or delirium tremens, hence the importance of undergoing appropriate treatment prescribed by a physician.

It typically takes **7 to 10 days** for your nervous system to return to normal, which is exactly how long it usually takes to withdraw from depressants.

## What are the symptoms of withdrawal?

Withdrawal symptoms vary depending on the psychoactive substance used. Stopping alcohol, GHB or benzodiazepines can lead to the following symptoms and potential complications:

- Tremors (hands, arms or body)
- Heavy sweating
- Numbness in the hands and feet
- Anxiety: feeling very nervous or like you have a knot in your stomach
- Rapid heartbeat: feeling heart palpitations
- High blood pressure
- Fever
- Nausea, vomiting
- Insomnia
- Sensory problems: hypersensitivity to noise, tingling under the skin, impaired vision
- Confusion, disorientation
- Auditory and/or visual hallucinations
- Withdrawal seizures

## When does withdrawal start?

Withdrawal starts when you suddenly stop or reduce your use of a substance. The intensity of the physical symptoms generally depends on how much and how often you use the substance in question.

## Why am I being asked not to stop using?

Alcohol, GHB and benzodiazepine withdrawal can put your health at risk, therefore treatment under medical supervision is recommended.

Your assessment results indicate that you must undergo medically supervised detox for your own safety. Even if you've never had withdrawal symptoms before, you must be careful. **Do not stop using the substance on your own.**

## How much should I be taking?

Suddenly stopping or reducing your intake before being admitted to detox is an unnecessary risk.

Some people decide to go on a final binge before entering detox, however, we strongly advise that you avoid doing this as it will only make your withdrawal riskier and more difficult.

That means you should take as much of the substance (alcohol, GHB or benzodiazepines) as you need to be physically comfortable and to limit the physical withdrawal symptoms.

**If you ever experience serious physical discomfort, go to your local Emergency department or call 811.**

