

Researchers deem Vancouver's safe injection site a success

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[CBC News](#)

VANCOUVER - Vancouver's supervised drug injection site is making its Downtown Eastside a better place to live, according to a new study.

Writing in Monday's issue of the Canadian Medical Association Journal, researchers said they found an improvement in public order in the area since the safe injection site was opened more than a year ago.

- INDEPTH: [Heroin clinics](#)

"This is a major question around safe injection facilities," said spokesperson Thomas Kerr. "Many people were concerned they would actually increase public disorder."

Kerr said the improvement is likely due to the high number of people injecting themselves inside the facility rather than outside on the streets of the hard-pressed neighbourhood.

The researchers at the British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV-AIDS said they also found far fewer discarded syringes and wrappers within 10 blocks of the site.

More than 500 addicts use the clinic every day.

The researchers also identified other good news for the neighbourhood. There had been concern the injection site would attract more drug dealers to the area, but that apparently hasn't happened.

"Our observations suggest that the establishment of the safer injecting facility has resulted in measurable improvements in public order, which in turn may improve the livability of communities and benefit tourism while reducing community concerns stemming from public drug use and discarded syringes," the researchers said.

- FROM SEPT. 21, 2004: [Addicts, health officials trumpet success of safe injection site](#)



Cooking a dose of heroin (AP Photo)

For the study, scientists checked a 10-city-block radius around the site three times a week at the same time each Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The study covered an 18-week period – from six weeks before the safe injection site launched in September 2003 to 12 weeks after the opening.