


THE FACTS *about* Fentanyl

What is it?

It is a **SYNTHETIC OPIOID** that is up to

50x stronger than heroin & **100x** stronger than morphine

 It is a **major contributor** to fatal and nonfatal **overdoses** in the U.S.¹

 It is **often added to other drugs** because of its extreme potency, which makes drugs cheaper, more powerful, more addictive, and more dangerous.

96% of WSU respondents said they have never used an opioid that wasn't prescribed to them, according to NCHA data.

Difficult to Detect


Many people may be unaware that their drugs are **LACED WITH FENTANYL** because...

1. it is nearly impossible to tell unless you use **TESTING STRIPS** on your drugs, which

 are **inexpensive**


 typically give **results within 5 minutes**


 can be the difference between **life** or death

 **are illegal in Kansas**,* although the legislature is considering some laws that would change this.


Even if the test is negative, **caution** should be taken as test strips might not detect more potent fentanyl-like drugs, like carfentanil.³


2 TYPES: Both are considered synthetic opioids.

 **Pharmaceutical** fentanyl is prescribed by doctors to treat severe pain, especially after surgery and for advanced-stage cancer.

 **Illicitly manufactured** fentanyl is distributed through illegal drug markets and makes up **most recent cases of fentanyl-related overdose**.

2. illicitly manufactured fentanyl is available on the drug market in different **FORMS**, like

 **Powdered** fentanyl¹ looks like many other drugs. It is commonly mixed with drugs like heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine and made into pills that are made to resemble other prescription opioids.

 **Liquid** fentanyl can be found in nasal sprays, eye drops, or dropped onto paper like small candies.

You Can Help

Even in small doses, it can be **DEADLY**.

150 people die every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl.²

Recognizing the **SIGNS OF OVERDOSE** can save a life. Here are some things to look for:

- Small, constricted “pinpoint **pupils**”
- Falling asleep or losing **consciousness**
- Slow, weak, or no **breathing**
- Choking or gurgling **sounds**
- Limp **body**
- Cold, clammy, and/or discolored **skin**

Additional **TIPS** from **ValleyHope**:

- **Always assume** that any pill or drug that is not purchased directly from a pharmacy or provided in a medical setting, likely contains fentanyl.
- **Carry** the nasal spray version of naloxone (generic naloxone, Narcan, Kloxxado) and make sure you know how to use it.
- **Learn** how to recognize an overdose and additional steps to take.
- **Educate** your family, friends and community about the dangers of fentanyl and encourage anyone struggling with substance use disorder to seek immediate help.

If you aren't sure whether a person is high or experiencing an overdose, treat the situation like an overdose. You could save a life. Here's **WHAT TO DO**:



1. Call 911 immediately.*



2. Administer naloxone,** if available.



3. Try to keep the person awake and breathing.



4. Lay the person on their side to prevent choking.



5. Stay with them until emergency workers arrive.

Resources

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 988
- United Way treatment resources at 211
- wichita.edu/prevention

Information was adapted from a handout from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

1. Wilson N, Karlisa M, Seth P, Smith H 4th, Davis NL. Drug and opioid-involved overdose deaths-United States, 2017-2018, MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:290-7. 10.15585/mmwr.mm6911a4

2. NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Estimates for 2020 are based on provisional data. Estimates for 2015-2019 are based on final data (available from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>).

3. Bergh, Marianne Skov-Skov et al, “Selectivity and sensitivity of urine fentanyl test strips to detect fentanyl analogues in illicit drugs.” The International journal on drug

policy vol. 90 (2021): <https://doi.org/10.1016./j.drugpo.2020.103065>

* Most states have laws that may protect a person who is overdosing or the person who called for help from legal trouble. ** Naloxone is a life-saving medication that can reverse the effects of opioid overdose and save lives. It is available in all 50 states and can be purchased from a local pharmacy without a prescription in most states.

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