

Keeping it Current

Raising Healthy Teens

Fentanyl



Did you know?

You can't see, taste, or smell fentanyl?

Drugs may contain deadly levels of fentanyl, and you would have no way of knowing it.



Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 20 to 40 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. Fentanyl is the primary driver of the recent rise in opioid overdoses.

There are two types of fentanyl: 1) Pharmaceutical fentanyl is used legally to treat severe pain and must be prescribed by a medical provider 2) Illicitly manufactured fentanyl is frequently associated with overdoses and is often taken with other drugs.

The Facts

- In 2022, DEA seized more than 50.6 million fake pills often laced with fentanyl -more than double the amount of fentanyl pills seized in 2021.
- Illegal fentanyl is being mixed with other drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and MDMA. This is especially dangerous because people are often unaware that fentanyl has been added
- Unlike most opiates, fentanyl can be lethal with the first use. It only takes a two-milligram dose, similar to 5-7 grains of salt, to cause death for an average-sized adult.
- Over 150 people die every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl.
- Between 2020 and 2021, drug overdose deaths among youth aged 14-18 years increased 20%, and researchers identified fentanyl as the primary cause of this increase.⁵ In 2021, 77% of teen drug overdose deaths were linked to fentanyl.
- Naloxone comes in both an injectable form and a needle-free device sprayed into the nostril (e.g., generic naloxone, Narcan®, Kloxxado®)
- **No substance bought online is safe.**
- The only safe medications come from licensed and accredited medical professionals. DEA warns that pills purchased outside of a licensed pharmacy are illegal, dangerous, and potentially lethal.
- **Overdose can happen to anyone**

The Risks

Fentanyl produces effects such as

- Euphoria
- Sedation
- Confusion
- Drowsiness
- Dizziness nausea or vomiting
- Urinary retention
- Pupillary constriction
- Respiratory depression.
- People who do not take fentanyl **exactly** as prescribed are at a higher risk of overdose with fentanyl than with other opioids. It can be lethal. Life-threatening effects can occur within 2 minutes of use.

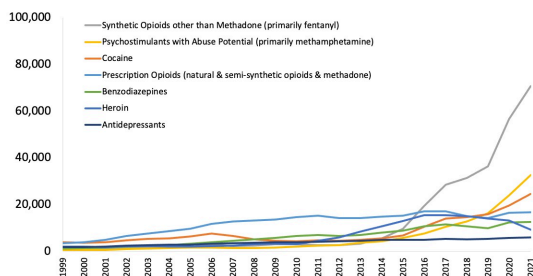
Signs of overdose

Recognizing the signs of opioid 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 and/or clammy skin
- Discolored skin (especially on lips and nails)

Figure 2. National Drug-Involved Overdose Deaths*, Number Among All Ages, 1999-2021



*Includes deaths with underlying causes of unintentional drug poisoning (X40-X44), suicide drug poisoning (X60-X64), homicide drug poisoning (X85), or drug poisoning of undetermined intent (Y10-Y14), as coded in the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2021 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 1/2023.



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tps://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/DEA-OPCK_FactSheet_December_2022.pdf

<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Fentanyl-Fact-Sheet-23.01.24-v1.pdf>