



Fentanyl and Narcan Safety and Usage Facts Sheet:

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid that is responsible for a significant number of overdose deaths. **Narcan (naloxone) is a life-saving medication** that can reverse the effects of opioid overdoses, including those caused by fentanyl. This safety and usage facts sheet provides essential information about fentanyl and Narcan, including safety tips, signs of overdose, and how to use Narcan effectively.

According to the **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)** drug overdose deaths rose from 2019 to 2022 with 107,941 drug overdose deaths reported in 2022. Deaths involving synthetic opioids other than methadone (primarily fentanyl) continued to rise with 73,838 overdose deaths reported in 2022.

What is Fentanyl:

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine. It is prescribed for severe pain management but is also illicitly manufactured and sold. Fentanyl can be found in various forms, including patches, lozenges, and illicit powders or pills.

HIGH POTENCY: Even a small amount can cause a fatal overdose.

ILLICIT USE: Often mixed with other drugs (heroin, cocaine) without the user's knowledge, increasing the risk of overdose.

RAPID ONSET: Effects occur quickly, which can lead to sudden and severe respiratory depression.

Signs of Fentanyl Overdose:

- Extreme drowsiness or unresponsiveness
- Slow or no breathing
- Blue or purple lips and nails
- Cold, clammy skin
- Pinpoint pupils

Narcan (Naloxone): What You Need to Know

Narcan is a brand name for naloxone, a medication designed to rapidly reverse opioid overdoses. It works by binding to opioid receptors, blocking the effects of opioids.

FORMS: Available as a nasal spray or an injectable solution.

How to Use Narcan (Naloxone):

NASAL SPRAY: Lay the person on their back. Insert the tip of the nozzle into one nostril. Press the plunger firmly to release the dose. If there's no response after 2-3 minutes, administer a second dose in the other nostril.

INJECTION: Use as directed by a healthcare professional. Inject into the muscle (thigh, arm) or vein. Monitor the person and administer additional doses every 2-3 minutes if necessary.

After Administering Narcan:

CALL 911: Even if the person wakes up, they need medical attention as the effects of Narcan may wear off before the opioids do.

MONITOR: Stay with the person until help arrives and be prepared to administer additional doses if symptoms return.

SUPPORT: Provide reassurance and ensure they stay calm and still until emergency services take over.

Safety Tips:

BE PREPARED: Carry Narcan if you or someone you know uses opioids, whether prescribed or illicitly obtained. Know how to recognize the signs of an opioid overdose.

SAFE STORAGE AND HANDLING: Store Narcan at room temperature and away from direct sunlight. Keep it in an accessible place where it can be quickly retrieved in an emergency.

PREVENTING FENTANYL EXPOSURE: Avoid using illicit drugs, as fentanyl is often mixed with other substances. Test drugs with fentanyl test strips if you choose to use substances. Never use alone and have a naloxone kit on hand.

Accessing Narcan:

- Available at most pharmacies without a prescription.
- Local health departments and harm reduction organizations often provide Narcan for free.

Understanding the dangers of fentanyl and the life-saving potential of Narcan is crucial in combating the opioid crisis. By being informed and prepared, you can help save lives and support those struggling with opioid use. **Remember, immediate action and proper use of Narcan can make the difference between life and death in the event of an overdose.**