



# Fentanyl: Facts, Risks and Prevention



## What is Fentanyl?

There are two types of fentanyl: pharmaceutical fentanyl and illegally made fentanyl. Both are considered synthetic opioids (made in a laboratory). Pharmaceutical fentanyl is prescribed by doctors to treat severe pain, especially after surgery and for advanced-stage cancer.

People who use substances that are not prescribed can be exposed to fentanyl without knowing. It is a major contributing factor to fatal and nonfatal overdoses in the U.S.



## The Dangers of Fentanyl

Two milligrams of fentanyl can be lethal depending on a person's body size, tolerance and past usage.

Two milligrams is the amount that can fit on the point of a pencil — it is an extremely small amount.

*Even if you know a pill or substance contains fentanyl, there is no way of knowing if it is a lethal dose.*

## What are Common Effects of Fentanyl?

Individuals may experience one or more common side effects from fentanyl, such as pain relief, sedation, confusion, drowsiness, euphoria, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, relaxation, urinary retention or pupillary constriction.

## Most Common Drugs Mixed with Fentanyl

Powdered fentanyl looks just like many other drugs. It is commonly mixed with substances like heroin, cocaine or methamphetamine and then made into pills that resemble other prescription medications, such as oxycodone, Xanax, Adderall or other types of pills.

In its liquid form, fentanyl can be added to nasal sprays, eye drops and dropped onto paper or mixed into pills that mimic the appearance of small, colored candies.

Fentanyl mixtures can also include other synthetic opioids, such as nitazenes or xylazine, a veterinary sedative, which can increase the harms associated with fentanyl.

These types of medications would be obtained illegally, not mixed into medications that you would purchase directly from a pharmacy.

If you are using substances and want help stopping, please contact our Peer Recovery Program at **848-303-0008** for recovery support services. If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call **911**.

## Statistics

### 70%

According to the DEA's 2024 National Drug Threat Assessment Report, fentanyl and other synthetic opioids are responsible for approximately 70% of lives lost in 2022.

### 279%

According to the CDC, drug overdose death rates involving fentanyl increased by 279% from 5.7 per 100,000 in 2016 to 21.6 per 100,000 in 2021.

### 150 people

Every day, over 150 people die from overdoses involving synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

Fentanyl impacts everyone. Deaths are spiking across the country, impacting both rural and urban areas.

## Carry Naloxone and Know How to Use It

Naloxone (Narcan) is a medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone can be given safely to people of all ages. NJ residents 14 years or older can get naloxone for free from participating pharmacies.



### Get naloxone for free!

Find out more about NJ's Naloxone365 Program by scanning the QR code or visiting [nj.gov/humanservices/stopoverdoses/](https://nj.gov/humanservices/stopoverdoses/)

**Always call 911 before administering naloxone.**

## August 21

### National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day

National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day was established to remember individuals lost to illicit fentanyl poisoning. On this day, fentanyl awareness organizations and affected families share their lived experiences to warn and inform the public about fentanyl overdose risks.