



## UPDATES ON FENTANYL USE AND PREVENTION

On National Fentanyl Awareness Day, May 7, the Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine joins state, and national agencies to raise awareness about the impact of fentanyl.

Fentanyl is a highly potent synthetic opioid used to treat patients with severe pain. It is approximately 100 times more potent than morphine and 50 times more powerful than heroin. Fentanyl can be detected by toxicology screening, however, para-fluorofentanyl (4-fluorofentanyl or pFF) and other fentanyl analogs (i.e., 'fentalogs') are not detectable via routine toxicology testing. Many fentalogs are more potent than fentanyl and have been detected with increasing frequency in illicit drug supplies throughout Michigan.

Users may not be aware of the presence of fentanyl and other unanticipated substances in recreational and illicit drug supplies. Fentanyl has been substituted for various substances that have been purchased illegally for recreational purposes. Unexpected fentanyl, especially when mixed with or substituted for other medications, places unsuspecting users at substantial risk for severe and potentially life-threatening symptoms, including respiratory depression and loss of consciousness. Coma and death are possible with the use of fentanyl.

Experts at the Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center assisted healthcare providers with care for fentanyl overdose-related exposures at a significantly higher rate in 2023 than the previous calendar year.

The center advises obtaining the opioid antagonist naloxone to help with a known or suspected opioid overdose. Naloxone can help to restore breathing and consciousness until emergency medical response is available to care for overdose victims. Naloxone kits are available from the center by at **1-313-887-0287**. Call **911** immediately if you suspect someone has been exposed to an opioid-laced substance and is not breathing. Naloxone may be lifesaving but is not a replacement for emergency medical care.

For questions regarding fentanyl or any other substances:

- Call the center at **1-800-222-1222**
- The National Community-Based Naloxone Finder can be accessed at the link below: <https://harmreduction.org/resource-center/harm-reduction-near-you/>
- Contact the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration at **800-662-4357** for resources and to connect with local substance abuse treatment centers



- You may also call Never Use Alone at **800-484-3731** or visit [neverusealone.com](https://www.neverusealone.com) for help

Clinicians who suspect cases that may be related to fentanyl or other synthetic opioids should call the center. Please report any instances to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Drug Poisoning Surveillance Team at [MDHHS-MODASurveillance@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-MODASurveillance@michigan.gov).

The Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine is available day or night, every day of the year. If you have questions or concerns about substance use, drug safety, or any other poison-related issue, call **1-800-222-1222**.