

Fentanyl - Student Fact Sheet

If you choose to use alcohol or other drugs inform yourself of ways that you can reduce the risk of harm to yourself and others when using these drugs.

Illicit (powdered) Fentanyl is present in our communities. It is being sold as fake prescription medications and being mixed into other substances such as cocaine, crystal meth, heroin and ecstasy. Illicit Fentanyl has a very high toxicity level and is more lethal than other street drugs.

Why are we concerned about illicit fentanyl?

These drugs have caused hundreds of deaths across Ontario; there are multiple concerns about these drugs;

1. They are made in illegal labs where there is little control over the quality of the drug being made.
2. All the types of Fentanyl have different toxicity levels much higher than other opioids such as morphine.
3. A dose as small as 1 grain of salt may be enough to be life threatening.
4. You may not know you are taking these drugs, as they are being hidden in other drugs. It is also being sold as a different prescription drugs like percocet or oxycontin.
5. You can overdose from these drugs.

If you choose to use, reduce your risk by:

1. It is your choice!

Only you should be making the choice of what you do or do not put into your body. Never take anything that you are not 100% sure what it is or where it came from.

2. Do your research!

You need to know and understand what you are putting into your body. Can you answer the following questions with certainty: What is the substance? How was it made? Has it been altered? What should the substance do to you? What are the side effects of taking the substance? What will you do if your experience is not what you expected? If it looks, smells or tastes different then be cautious about using it!

3. Prevent an overdose from happening!

If you choose to use, following these tips will help to prevent an overdose:

- Never use alone (if you end up in trouble there will be no one to help you)
- Never mix drugs (especially pain medication and alcohol or with anti-anxiety medication)
- If you are using a new substance, always take a small test dose first to see how it is going to affect you.
- Overdoses can happen to anyone, there is no magic formula to say who will overdose and who will not.

4. Know the signs of an overdose!

People having an overdose from pain medications such as Fentanyl will have one or more of the following signs:

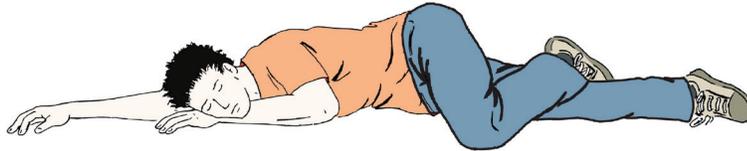
- The person is “**nodding off**”, or won’t wake up easily or unresponsive
- They may be breathing very slowly or not at all
- Their lips and fingernails turn blue
- Their skin is cold and clammy

- Their body is limp
- They may be snoring or gurgling
- They may throw up

5. Know what to do if someone is in trouble!

- **CALL 911** (if you think someone is in trouble you have to always make the call)
- Get trained on how to give Naloxone and have a Naloxone kit with you
- Get trained in first aid and CPR

6. Know how to put someone in the recovery position and when to use the recovery position.



What is a Naloxone Kit?

Naloxone is the drug used to stop an opioid overdose. Naloxone will allow time for the person to get to a hospital to receive medical treatment in order to save their life. If you have a Naloxone kit you should carry it with you, especially when you are going to be using substances. It is no good to you or anyone else if it is at home in your bedroom!

You can get Naloxone kits from your local Health Unit and at some local pharmacies.

Eastern Ontario Health Unit

1-800-267-7120

www.EOHU.ca



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit

1-800-660-5853

www.healthunit.org

