

# Fentanyl Overdose Tips

## GIVE NALOXONE (NARCAN) IMMEDIATELY!

Call 911, naloxone is short acting and patient should have medical observation.

For a fentanyl overdose you may need more naloxone than you have on hand.

### DO RESCUE BREATHING!

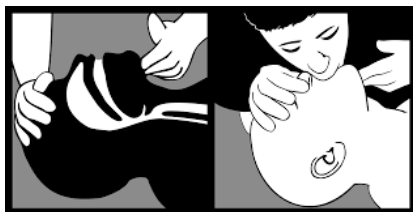
Tilt chin, open mouth, plug nose, breathe.

KEEP BREATHING...

MORE BREATHING...

1 BREATH EVERY 5 SECONDS...

Wait about 2 minutes WHILE RESCUE BREATHING before giving the next dose of naloxone.



SO WHAT DO WE DO???  
HOW DO WE STAY SAFE?

**ASSUME FENTANYL.** The drug supply is just too inconsistent now and it is unpredictable. Fentanyl has popped up everywhere, in all different forms you're your drugs look weird or different, taste, smell or seem off in any way, go slow, be careful, do less at first.

**Have naloxone (Narcan):** that means everyone! Whether you don't normally use opioids carry it anyway because you never know where fentanyl might crop up in the drugs.

The key to surviving a fentanyl overdose is administering naloxone right away to the person experiencing respiratory depression. **DO NOT WAIT.** More than 1 dose may need to be administered.

REMEMBER:

- Don't use alone
- If your drugs look, smell, taste, dissolve, or in any way seem different than usual, **BE CAREFUL**, use caution and smarts.
- Use less if you suspect fentanyl
- Hydrate
- Get naloxone, replace it as soon as you lose it or use it or give it away

Works Cited:

Control, C. f. (2014, November). *www.cdc.gov*. Retrieved from [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ersbdb/EmergencyResponseCard\\_2\\_9750022.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ersbdb/EmergencyResponseCard_2_9750022.html).

Don Hunjabi - EMT, K. B.-R.-P. (2008). Meet Narcan: The amazing drug that helps save overdose patients. *Journal of Emergency Medical Services*, 1.

# Fentanyl

## Overdose Prevention Tips



A little baggie of fentanyl residue (confirmed in lab) from San Francisco, 2015



Some Xanax that were actually fentanyl among other things, (confirmed in lab) from San Francisco, 2015

**The Homeless Persons' Health Project** is a clinic of the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency. We offer medication-assisted treatment services for substance use disorders and integrated behavioral health services.



Please contact with any questions or to find out where to get naloxone in Santa Cruz:  
HHPH – 115-A Coral St., Santa Cruz, CA  
831-454-2080 or [HHPHReferral@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:HHPHReferral@santacruzcounty.us)

### Clinic Hours:

Monday and Wednesday 8:00a - 5:00p  
Tuesday and Thursday 1:00p – 5:00p  
Friday 8:00a – 3:00p  
Closed from 12n-1p each day

Brochure adapted but blatantly stolen from our friends at Healthy Streets Outreach Program - Lynn, MA

### How to give naloxone:

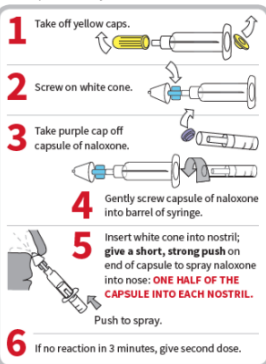
There are 4 common naloxone products. Follow the instructions for the type you have.

#### Nasal spray



#### Nasal spray with assembly

This requires assembly. Follow the instructions below.



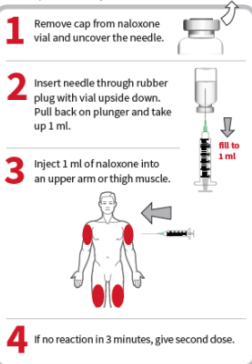
#### Auto-injector

The naloxone auto-injector needs no assembly and can be injected into the outer thigh, even through clothing. It contains a speaker that provides step-by-step instructions.



#### Injectable naloxone

This requires assembly. Follow the instructions below.



# Do we have FENTANYL here?

## YES....but it's complicated!

On the EAST COAST, where the heroin is sold in powder form, fentanyl has now been found in a lot of the drug supply, mixed in or in some cases it has completely replaced heroin. In Massachusetts for example, fentanyl contributed to 66% of overdose deaths.

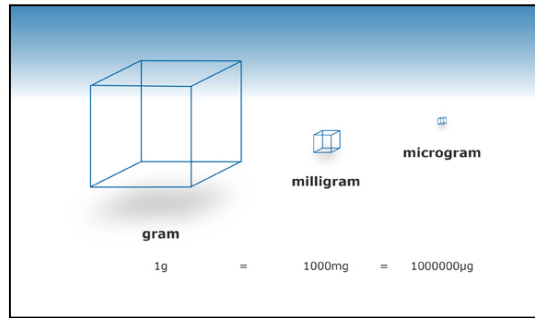
## What about here on the WEST COAST???

So far, we are not seeing a lot of fentanyl *mixed in* to the tar in the same way it's mixed into powder on the EAST COAST. However, we have had some samples of brown/black tar-like heroin (kind of gritty/sandy looking) that had fentanyl and acetyl fentanyl in it (that is an "analog" of fentanyl). For the MOST PART the tar is still just heroin (and getting better in quality!), but this could change. In contrast to what is happening on the EAST COAST, we only had about 11 deaths in San Francisco where fentanyl was involved in 2015.

We also see batches of fentanyl sold as a white powder, sometimes people call it "china white." It looks like a fine white or grayish white powder. Sometimes it is sold as fentanyl and people know that's exactly what it is.

We also see batches of pills sold on the street as one thing (Xanax, Roxies, Norcos, etc.) but are actually fentanyl and other drugs pressed into the shape of other pills. This caused multiple deaths in 2015!

In April 2017 there was a batch of crack cocaine that had fentanyl in it, causing multiple overdoses and one death.



Take a look at the picture above.

Fentanyl is measured in micrograms.

That tiny square on the right is 1 microgram!

That larger square on the left is 1 gram.

**1 microgram is 1,000,000<sup>th</sup> of a gram!**

With fentanyl that tiny square is many many times stronger than the 1 gram cube of heroin

Fentanyl hits the bloodstream and peaks within minutes, quicker when injected.

**Respiratory depression or arrest (*breathing slows down or stops*) can happen almost immediately.**



## How is fentanyl different than

Fentanyl is a synthetic "opioid" so it is in the same *family* as heroin but it's not the same. Fentanyl is about 80-100 times stronger than morphine, or about 50 times stronger than heroin.

It is extremely FAST ACTING, but it has a SHORT DURATION, so comes on strong and wears off quickly.

The good news: Naloxone (Narcan) will work on a fentanyl overdose, make sure you have it on hand!

The bad news: You must administer it right away if someone stops breathing. You do not have much time, so please act fast.

Fentanyl hits within seconds and overdose (respiratory depression aka "slowed breathing") will begin within seconds to minutes and be potentially fatal within the first 10-15 minutes after using.

Fentanyl overdose can occasionally cause rapid rigidity of the chest or, "wooden chest syndrome". This means that the naloxone may work on the receptors BUT the chest is stiff and can't take in air so rescue breathing won't work.

**Don't be fooled by the pulse!!!!**

Sometimes the blood pressure spikes during an overdose and the muscles may spasm or get stiff (Control, 2014)