



Roll Call Training Bulletin

Produced by: Lieutenant Greg Galliano
Prepared by: PSU

Katherine Lester, Chief of Police
Volume 107

Fentanyl Safety Updated 10-18-2023

Illicit drugs pose a significant threat to law enforcement personnel who may come in contact with them through routine law enforcement or emergency activities. Fentanyl is particularly dangerous and has become well known for causing an alarming increase in overdose incidents and overdose-related deaths. **Law Enforcement in the Sacramento region and around the United States have been encountering fentanyl at a rapidly increasing rate. Fentanyl is involved in more deaths of Americans under 50 than any cause of death, including heart disease, cancer, homicide, suicide, and other accidents.**

Fentanyl:

Fentanyl is a member of the class/family of drugs known as narcotic analgesics. Fentanyl is a rapid-acting synthetic opiate, typically used to alleviate pain. Fentanyl depresses the respiratory functions in the central nervous system (CNS) and is estimated to be 50-100 times more potent than morphine. Pharmaceutical fentanyl is used for pain management in cancer patients and is delivered in patch form applied on the skin. Other members of the fentanyl family, such as carfentanil, alfentanil, and remifentanil are more potent than fentanyl, and because of their significant potency are very dangerous. Even small exposures to any of them can be fatal.

Because of its powerful opioid properties and ready availability, fentanyl has also been diverted into the illegal drug market, where it is used as an additive to "to cut" heroin and other controlled substances. Fentanyl may be added to heroin to increase its potency or to be disguised as highly potent heroin. Many users mistakenly believe that they are purchasing heroin when in fact they are purchasing fentanyl. This often results in overdose deaths as mentioned above.

Fentanyl may be ingested orally, inhaled through the nose or mouth, or absorbed through the skin or eyes. Exposure to even a very small amount may lead to significant health-related complications, respiratory depression, or death.

Effect on the Body:

Similar to other opioid analgesics, fentanyl produces effects such as relaxation, euphoria, pain relief, sedation, confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, pupillary constriction, and respiratory depression. Respiratory depression is the symptom that most commonly precedes unconsciousness and death, and officers should be aware of themselves or their partners having difficulty breathing.

Narcan (Naloxone):

Narcan interrupts the effects of opioid analgesics, including respiratory depression. If an officer or their partner have a known exposure and/or are experiencing symptoms, Narcan should be administered as soon as possible. Narcan does not have any side effects so in the event that an overdose or exposure was not the cause of the symptoms, and it's another medical emergency instead, Narcan will not have adverse effects. Once Narcan has been administered, it is important for the recipient to receive immediate medical attention.

Common Street Names used for Fentanyl:

Apace, China Girl, China Town, China White, Dance Fever, Goodfellas, Great Bear, He-Man, Poison, and Tango & Cash.



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Preventing Emergency Responders' Exposures to Illicit Drugs:

Emergency responders are likely to come into contact with a mixture of illicit drugs during routine job duties. These mixtures of illicit drugs can include cocaine, methamphetamine, cannabinoids, cathinone, and opioids, and they can be found in many forms, such as powder, pill, liquid, etc. Exposure to any illicit drug can be harmful. Although the components of illicit drug mixtures might not be known at the time, first responders should use the following information to educate themselves about safe operating procedures, and proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when responding to incidents that may involve illicit drugs.

Fentanyl exposure may occur through:

1. Breathing / inhalation.
2. Skin absorption through direct contact.
3. Absorption through indirect contact, **such as eating.**
4. Contact with mucous membranes such as eyes, nose, or mouth.
5. Touching or being injured with objects **including but not limited to objects** such as a needle.

WHAT SHOULD FIRST RESPONDERS DO WHEN FENTANYL MIGHT BE PRESENT?

1. Conduct a risk assessment for the presence of fentanyl.
 - Is a person unconscious and the cause unknown?
 - Are suspected drugs or paraphernalia visible?
 - What is the form and volume of suspected drugs?
2. During the assessment assume any white powder is fentanyl.
3. If the presence of fentanyl or any synthetic opioid is suspected employees should first address any immediate health concerns of any involved party.
4. If a person has been exposed to fentanyl, employees should secure the scene (including vehicles) where there may be presence of fentanyl.
5. Employees shall contact their supervisor immediately.
6. Supervisors shall notify the watch commander, and if appropriate, contact the on-call HIDTA SPD personnel and advise of the situation.
7. If an employee has been exposed to fentanyl, resulting in symptoms, the watch commander will initiate a call out of Forensiclean to have the exposed areas decontaminated.
8. If necessary, HIDTA may respond to collect any remaining fentanyl.

WHAT DOES FENTANYL LOOK LIKE AND HOW TO COLLECT IT?



Clandestinely produced fentanyl can be encountered in powder form or in fake pharmaceutical pills. It can also be placed on other narcotics, such as methamphetamine. If you encounter large quantities of fentanyl or



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powdered fentanyl, immediately contact your supervisor. Supervisors shall notify the watch commander and if necessary, contact the on-call SPD HIDTA detective.

COLLECTION OF FENTANYL

Because any suspected illicit drug or paraphernalia may contain powerful opioids such as fentanyl, handling unknown or suspected substances in any capacity is inherently hazardous. Proper handling of suspected illicit drug samples is essential to keeping oneself, co-workers, family members and the general public safe. Accordingly, the following should be observed when dealing with actual illicit drugs or scenes/incidents with the potential for exposure:

1. Always wear nitrile gloves when illicit drugs may be present and change the gloves in a manner that avoids exposure when they become contaminated.
2. Wear respiratory protection and a face shield if powdered illicit drugs are visible or suspected.
3. When possible, have a second person observe during the booking process. In the event of an exposure, this person will be able to render medical aid and request medics.
4. Keep Narcan (Naloxone) readily available when handling illicit drugs in case of exposure.
5. Avoid performing tasks or operations that may cause illicit drugs to become airborne. Because of their dangerous nature, PCP, LSD, fentanyl, and loaded syringes are exempt from preliminary testing per General Order 525.01. Additionally, these drugs should be "double-bagged" or placed inside two plastic pouches with each pouch separately heat-sealed.
6. If possible, attempt to test the fentanyl using the TruNarc Narcotic Analyzer.
7. CSOs shall not book any controlled substances.
8. Do not touch the eyes, nose, or mouth after touching any surface that may be contaminated, even if wearing gloves.
9. Wash hands with soap and water after working in an area that may be contaminated, even if gloves were worn. Do not use alcohol-based hand sanitizer or bleach.

Decontamination:

Steps responders should take to clean and remove illicit drugs.

1. Remove contaminated PPE.
2. Responders who come into contact with illicit drugs should immediately wash off the skin with soap and water.
3. Bare skin should be covered, as well as all open wounds.
4. Do not use hand sanitizer, any alcohol-based cleaner, or bleach to clean skin that may have come into contact with illicit drugs, as this may increase the rate of absorption.
5. Remove and wash all clothing that may have come into contact with illicit drugs. Place contaminated clothing in a plastic bag and seal it. Labeled, durable 6 mil polyethylene bags or heavy garbage bags are recommended to avoid tears or other accidental chances for exposure.
6. Wash contaminated clothing separate from other clothing.
7. Clean reusable PPE and equipment according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
8. Place contaminated single-use PPE in labeled heavy garbage bags or durable 6 mil polyethylene bags and dispose of appropriately.