

FENTANYL AND OPIOID OVERDOSE TOOLKIT



Drug overdose has been one of the top three causes of injury-related death in the United States since 2019, and rates continue to rise (NIDA, 2024). Fentanyl—a synthetic opioid 50–100 times stronger than morphine—is now involved in most overdose deaths nationwide (CDC, 2024). It exists in two forms: pharmaceutical fentanyl, prescribed by a doctor for severe pain, and illicitly manufactured fentanyl (IMF), which is produced for the illegal drug market. IMF is often mixed with other drugs to increase potency and reduce cost, making those substances more dangerous and addictive. Even small amounts of fentanyl can be fatal.

IMF appears in many forms, including powders, pills, nasal sprays, eye drops, and liquids (NIDA, 2021). Powdered fentanyl looks identical to other drugs and is frequently combined with heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine, or pressed into pills that resemble prescription medications. Because the amount of fentanyl in any drug is unknown, many people may not realize they are using a substance containing fentanyl—or that it may contain a lethal dose. Any drug not obtained directly from a pharmacy carries this risk, and as little as two milligrams can be deadly, especially for someone without opioid tolerance (DEA).

THE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE EFFECT

When drugs are made illegally in illegal labs, there is no quality control, substance containment, or FDA approval. So that means that the fentanyl in a powder mixture does not evenly distribute, leading to some parts of the pill containing deadly amounts of fentanyl, while other parts may not. Therefore, taking pills not prescribed by a doctor can be dangerous. DEA laboratory testing in 2024 revealed that five out of ten fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills contained a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl.



Common Opioids

- Oxycodone (OxyContin, Percocet)
- Oxymorphone (Opana)
- Codeine
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin)
- Morphine (Kadian, Avinza)
- Methadone

According to the CDC, 73,690 people in the United States died of drug overdoses and drug poisonings in the 12 months ending in April 2025. Some of these deaths were attributed to fentanyl mixed with other illicit drugs like cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin, with many users unaware they were taking fentanyl. Only two milligrams of fentanyl are considered a potentially lethal dose; it's particularly dangerous for someone who does not have a tolerance to opioids.

From 1999 to 2023, approximately 806,000 people died from an opioid overdose. This includes overdose deaths involving prescription and illegal opioids.

- 80,391 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in 2024, which is a 27% decrease from 2023.
- 556 overdose deaths in Kansas occurred in 2024, which is a 15% decrease from 2023.



People can experience a variety of symptoms when they are overdosing, such as:

Cannot be woken up



Shallow breath or no breathing



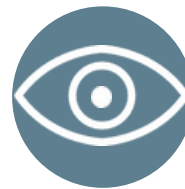
Snoring or gurgling



Blue/grey lips or fingertips



Tiny pupils



Cold & clammy skin



Pink Cocaine, also known as tusi, is a pink-colored powder that often smells sweet and produces hallucinogenic, mind-altering effects. Today, pink cocaine rarely contains cocaine. DEA testing has found mixtures including: Fentanyl, Xylazine, Cocaine, Methamphetamine, Ketamine, and MDMA.

Effects and Risks

Pink Cocaine's effects are unpredictable and can be extremely dangerous or fatal. Like MDMA, it can alter mood and perception, but ingesting an unknown combination of drugs poses severe health risks.



In 2022, the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) held the first National Fentanyl Awareness Day to educate individuals about fentanyl dangers and threats that it poses. Visit

<https://fentanylawarenessday.org/> for upcoming dates as well as information on past campaigns.

In 2024, the DEA seized more than 60 million fentanyl-laced fake pills and nearly 8,000 pounds of fentanyl powder.

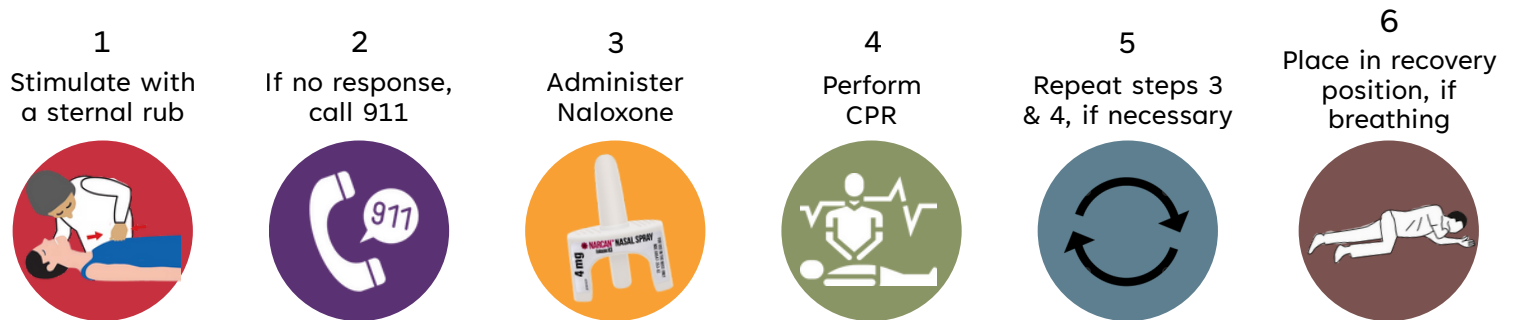
WHAT IS NALOXONE?

An opioid overdose reversal medication. It is the same as Narcan, Kloxxado, and Revive. It is safe to use on someone who is not on an opioid and will not hurt anyone who is not currently using an opioid. It is safe to use on kids, even dogs.

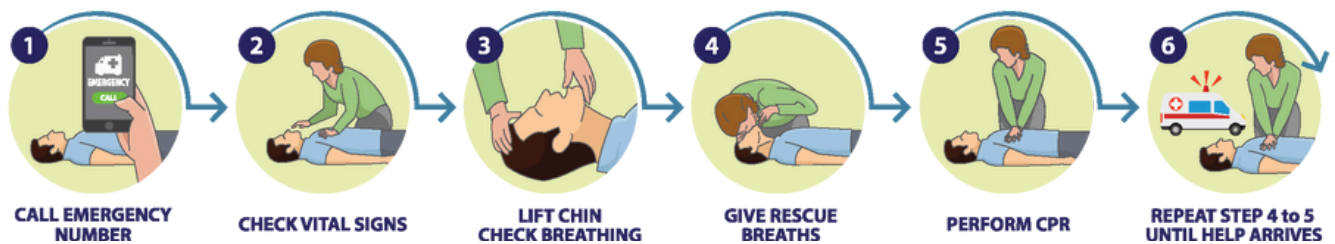


Naloxone typically works within 1-3 minutes and typically lasts 30-90 minutes. The life span for naloxone is 2-4 years. Proper storage of naloxone is important; keep it away from extreme heat and freezing temperatures because that can cause the medication to be less effective. It is important to note that an expired kit of naloxone may still be effective if used. Using an expired kit of naloxone is better than not using naloxone at all. To learn more about expired Naloxone, check out our “Using Expired Naloxone Toolkit: <https://www.dccca.org/program/behavioral-health-training-technical-assistance-kansas/>

Here are the 6 steps you can take if you suspect someone has overdosed on opioids:



FIRST AID CPR



WHERE TO GET NALOXONE/NARCAN?

DCCCA can provide FREE Naloxone to community members in Kansas: <https://www.dccca.org/program/kansas-naloxone-program/>

Naloxone can be co-prescribed with an opioid you are already taking.

Participating pharmacies can provide Naloxone upon request without a doctor's prescription: <https://www.pharmacy.ks.gov/home>

Naloxone is available for over-the-counter use at any participating drug stores.

RESOURCES

SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

- Provides 24-hour free and confidential treatment referral information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery.
- Treatment services locator: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/locators>

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988 (Call, text, chat)

- Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress across the US. Available 24/7/365
- <https://988lifeline.org/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Overdose prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/prevention/index.html>
- Drug Overdose Data: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

- Recovery Resources: <https://www.dea.gov/recovery-resources>
- Education and Prevention: <https://www.dea.gov/what-we-do/education-and-prevention>
- Fentanyl Awareness: <https://www.dea.gov/fentanylawareness>

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

- Opioids: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/opioids>
- Drug Overdose Facts and Figures: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates>
- Overdose Reversal Medications: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/overdose-reversal-medications>
- Treatment: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/treatment>

DCCCA

- Behavioral Health Services: <https://www.dccca.org/program-types/behavioral-health-services/>
- Community-Based Services: <https://www.dccca.org/program-types/community-based-services/>
- Naloxone Program: <https://www.dccca.org/program/kansas-naloxone-program/>