

# MATTERS

Medication for Addiction Treatment & Electronic Referrals

## Facts on Fentanyl

### What is fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that can be harmful to the body when not used under the direction of a healthcare professional.

Fentanyl is commonly mixed into heroin but is found in other drugs (i.e. cocaine & methamphetamine).

≈50x

stronger  
than heroin

≈100x

stronger  
than morphine

### Is fentanyl illegal?



Fentanyl is illegal when not prescribed by a healthcare professional.

### Legal (medical) fentanyl

- Safety precautions in place
- Less side effects than other opioids
- Non-invasive nasal administration available
- Preferred opioid pain medication

### Illegal (street) fentanyl



- No safety precautions
- Unpredictable doses
- Often contaminated with other substances

Scan to learn more  
and request **FREE**  
fentanyl test strips



# Illegal fentanyl can be deadly!

**88%** of opioid-related deaths nationwide involved fentanyl in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

**92%** of opioid-related deaths in New York State involved fentanyl in 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## How much can be lethal?



A very small amount (10-15 grains of table salt) can be lethal based on usage, tolerance, and body size.

## Why is this important?

**3-5 days** after taking a prescription opioid a person may be at risk of developing an opioid dependence.

## Harm reduction strategies



Use fentanyl test strips to detect the presence of fentanyl in a substance.



If you get a positive result for fentanyl, DO NOT use the substance.



Always have naloxone (aka Narcan) ready and someone nearby.

## Myth or fact?

- 1** If you touch fentanyl you can overdose - **MYTH.**
- 2** Being in close proximity to fentanyl can cause harmful effects - **MYTH.**
- 3** Fentanyl is safe in medical environments - **FACT.**
- 4** Fentanyl is in every drug - **MYTH.**

1. Injury Facts - National Safety Council. Drug overdoses. Retrieved from: <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/home-and-community/safety-topics/drugoverdoses/data-details/>

2. New York State Department of Health. New York State opioid annual report 2023. (p. 25). Retrieved from: [https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/opioid/data/pdf/nys\\_opioid\\_annual\\_report\\_2023.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/opioid/data/pdf/nys_opioid_annual_report_2023.pdf)

