

Fentanyl Exposure Risks for First Responders

Fentanyl Facts:

One **CANNOT** overdose by casually touching or breathing fentanyl in the air.

- ◆ The body **will not** absorb enough fentanyl through the skin to cause an overdose by touching a surface with fentanyl particles (e.g., doorknob, dollar bill, counter, etc.).
- ◆ It would require more than **3 hours of unmasked exposure** to fentanyl dust present in an unventilated and contained space to cause fentanyl intoxication.
- ◆ In the hypothetical event of a substantial exposure through skin or air, overdose symptoms would **appear slowly** and allow enough time to detect and reverse it.
- ◆ **Misinformation** about the risk of fentanyl exposure through the skin or air **aggravates stress and burnout among first responders.**

How to Avoid Exposures:

Nitrile gloves, while **RECOMMENDED, SHOULD NOT DELAY** emergently administering naloxone for overdose rescue.

FOLLOW departmental guidelines if scene involves large amounts of suspected fentanyl: pill milling operation, clandestine lab, gross contamination, or spill.



What to Do if an Exposure Occurs:

NOTIFY other first responders. **WASH** skin thoroughly with cool water and soap.

AVOID touching eyes, mouth, nose, and **DO NOT** eat, drink, or use the bathroom until you have washed your hands.

AVOID hand sanitizers or bleach.



Do Not Delay in Administering Naloxone to Save Someone's Life

Fentanyl 101:

- ◆ Colorless, odorless, and tasteless synthetic opioid that is 50x more potent than heroin and 100x more potent than morphine.
- ◆ Can be present in different forms including **powder, tablets, or solutions** and can **be swallowed, snorted, smoked, or injected.**
- ◆ Cannot tell by looking whether fentanyl is present in illicit drugs.
- ◆ The DEA estimates that **60% of all counterfeit pills contain fentanyl.**



Immediately Administer Naloxone When Overdose Symptoms are Present:

IF ANYONE HAS SYMPTOMS OF FENTANYL OVERDOSE



Slowed or stopped breathing

Drowsiness or Dizziness



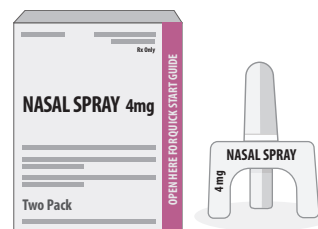
Blue lips/nails



Can't be woken up



ADMINISTER NALOXONE



More than 1 dose may be necessary.

If naloxone is not available: Provide rescue breathing until EMS arrives. Use standard basic life support safety precautions (e.g., pocket mask, gloves) to address the exposure risk.

There are no long-term adverse effects from using naloxone.

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