



# Frequently Asked Questions About Fentanyl

## What is fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a drug that is 50-100 times more potent than other opioids such as heroin, oxycodone and morphine. Doctors sometimes prescribe fentanyl for severe pain and for some medical procedures. Because of the strength of this drug, the dose must be very carefully monitored by a health care provider to make sure that the person does not overdose.

Sometimes fentanyl is used illegally and not received from a licensed prescriber (such as a doctor or nurse practitioner), or is not used properly. This is when using the drug becomes very dangerous; it can slow down a person's breathing, lead to a coma, and even cause death.

## What does fentanyl look like?

Police have found illegal fentanyl in communities across Saskatchewan in the following forms:

- pills sold as fake oxycodone or other drugs such as gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), ketamine, or ecstasy;
- powder, sold as heroin or fentanyl;

- powder mixed into other drugs such as cocaine, crystal meth, or marijuana; and
- fentanyl patches used for purposes other than they were prescribed.

**Fentanyl can be a deadly drug especially if used illegally and/or improperly.**

## What are the risks of misusing fentanyl?

When fentanyl is illegally made, sold, and improperly used, some situations that make its use very risky are:

- Drug dealers sometimes sell this drug by telling the buyer that it is oxycodone when it is actually fentanyl or other substances;
- There could be other toxic chemicals combined with fentanyl. There is no way of knowing the strength or toxicity of this drug; and
- Some people use prescribed fentanyl incorrectly by sucking on patches or cutting the patch to remove the drug for injection. This could lead to an accidental overdose which could result in death.



## Why are you giving this information now?

Fentanyl can be very toxic and there has been a rise in the number of fentanyl-related deaths in Saskatchewan and Canada. This means that there may be more of this drug in our province, which can increase the danger, especially to people who use illegal drugs.

## Who can I contact if I need help regarding drug use?

Contact your local Addictions/ Mental Health Services office, doctor or other health care provider if you need more information. To locate Addictions/Mental Health Services near you:

- visit [www.saskatchewan.ca/addictions](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/addictions);
- check the green pages of your phone book for your local health region's services;
- visit HealthLine Online at [healthlineonline.ca](http://healthlineonline.ca); or
- call HealthLine at 811. Specially trained staff are available to provide mental health and addictions crisis support, in a safe and confidential manner.



## Who can I contact if I suspect someone is selling fentanyl?

To report illicit activity associated with fentanyl use you may contact Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers.



Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers is 100% anonymous and does not subscribe to call display nor are your calls traced or recorded. Web and Text Tips are encrypted. Call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477), text TIP206 and your message to CRIMES (274637), or you can submit a tip online at [www.saskcrimestoppers.com](http://www.saskcrimestoppers.com) where you can also view other unsolved crimes.

Photo provided by Regina Integrated Drug Enforcement Street Team.

NOTE: This material is for information only and should not replace advice from an Addiction or Mental Health Counsellor, doctor or other health care provider.

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