FLORIDA SHERIFFS RISK MANAGEMENT FUND

*Established 1978* *Protecting Those Who Protect Us*

# INCREASING DANGERS OF FENTANYL EXPOSURE

In the last several years, U.S. Law Enforcement has seen a dramatic increase in the availability of dangerous synthetic opioids. A large majority of these synthetic opioids are structural derivatives of the synthetic drug "fentanyl." Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid currently listed as a **Schedule II** prescription drug that mimics the effects of morphine in the human body, but has potency 50–100 times that of morphine. Fentanyl and carfentanil are currently listed under Schedule II of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) meaning they have a currently approved medical use and a high potential for abuse which may lead to severe psychological and/or physical dependence.

**Fentanyl-related substances have been identified in:**

- **Powder**
- **Pill**
- **Capsule**
- **Liquid**
- **(and on) Blotter Paper**

Due to the high potency of fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances, exposure to small quantities can cause serious negative health effects, respiratory depression, and even death.

**Police dogs are also at risk of serious health effects from exposure to fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances.**

First responders who may encounter fentanyl or fentanyl-related substances should maintain an individual (personal) PPE kit, which includes:

- Nitrile gloves
- N-95 dust masks
- Sturdy eye protection
- Paper coveralls - shoe covers
- Naloxone Injector(s)

When encountering unknown powders, personnel should use, at the minimum, Personal PPE to include nitrile gloves, N-95 dust mask, eye protection, disposable paper suit, or paper coveralls, and shoe covers. Naloxone should also be readily available for administration.

## WARNING

There is a significant threat to law enforcement personnel, and other first responders, who may come in contact with fentanyl and other fentanyl-related substances through routine law enforcement, emergency or life- saving activities. Since fentanyl can be ingested orally, inhaled through the nose or mouth, or absorbed through the skin or eyes, any substance suspected to contain fentanyl should be treated with extreme caution as exposure to a small amount can lead to significant health-related complications, respiratory depression, or death.

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## Indicators of exposure

Personnel should look for any cyanosis (turning blue or bluish color) of victims, including the skin or lips, as this could be a sign of fentanyl overdose caused by respiratory arrest. Further, before proceeding, personnel should examine the scene for any loose powders (no matter how small), as well as nasal spray bottles, as these could be signs of fentanyl use.


As matter of reference it has been determined that it would only take 2-3 milligrams of fentanyl to induce respiratory depression, arrest and possibly death (see photo of penny). When visually compared, 2 to 3 milligrams of fentanyl is about the same as five to seven individual grains of table salt.

## Exposure Risks and Treatment

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|---|---|
| **EXPOSURE** | Fentanyl can be injested through the nose or mouth, or absorbed through the skin or eyes |
| **SYMPTOMS** | Respiratory depression, drowsiness, sedation, disorientation, pinpoint pupils and clammy skin |
| **IMMEDIATE ACTION** | Move to fresh air, wash exposed area immediately with soap and water |
| **MEDICAL** | Seek medical attention, monitor victim, be prepared to administer naloxone |

**Do NOT use hand sanitizer**

## ROLL CALL VIDEO

https://www.dea.gov/media.shtml

## RESOURCES

www.dea.gov
www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov
www.cdc.gov
www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/fentanyl.html
www.emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00384.asp
www.cdc.gov/niosh/
www.drugabuse.gov
www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/fentanyl
www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/fentanyl

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