



Drug Enforcement Administration
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PUBLIC SAFETY ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEA Reports Widespread Threat of Fentanyl Mixed with Xylazine

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is warning the American public of a sharp increase in the trafficking of fentanyl mixed with xylazine. Xylazine, also known as “Tranq,” is a powerful sedative that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved for veterinary use.

“Xylazine is making the deadliest drug threat our country has ever faced, fentanyl, even deadlier,” said Administrator Milgram. “DEA has seized xylazine and fentanyl mixtures in 48 of 50 States. The DEA Laboratory System is reporting that in 2022 approximately 23% of fentanyl powder and 7% of fentanyl pills seized by the DEA contained xylazine.”

Xylazine and fentanyl drug mixtures place users at a higher risk of suffering a fatal drug poisoning. Because xylazine is not an opioid, naloxone (Narcan) does not reverse its effects. Still, experts always recommend administering naloxone if someone might be suffering a drug poisoning. People who inject drug mixtures containing xylazine also can develop severe wounds, including necrosis—the rotting of human tissue—that may lead to amputation.

According to the CDC, 107,735 Americans died between August 2021 and August 2022 from drug poisonings, with 66 percent of those deaths involving synthetic opioids like fentanyl. The Sinaloa Cartel and Jalisco Cartel in Mexico, using chemicals largely sourced from China, are primarily responsible for the vast majority of the fentanyl that is being trafficked in communities across the United States.

FDA recently communicated to health care providers about the risks to patients exposed to xylazine in illicit drugs. A copy of that communication can be found here: [FDA alerts healthcare professionals of risks to patients exposed to xylazine in illicit drugs.](#)

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The DEA issues Public Safety Alerts to warn the public of new, emerging threats to the safety and health of the American people. The DEA last issued a Public Safety Alert in September 2021

warning the public about increases in the lethality and availability of fentanyl-laced fake prescription pills. The DEA updated that alert in November 2022 warning that six out of ten fentanyl-laced fake prescription pills contain a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl.