

Counterfeit pills are made to deceive and are a major cause of death by overdose.¹

Many resemble prescription opioids such as oxycodone (Oxycontin®, Percocet®) or hydrocodone (Vicodin®), benzodiazepines like alprazolam (Xanax®), or stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall®).

Unlike pills from licensed pharmacies, neither the doses nor the ingredients in counterfeit pills can be trusted.



Fentanyl kills and it's everywhere.

Most overdose deaths involve synthetic opioids like illicitly manufactured fentanyl.

Lower-cost fentanyl is mixed with drugs like heroin, methamphetamine, and cocaine, increasing the chances of a fatal interaction.

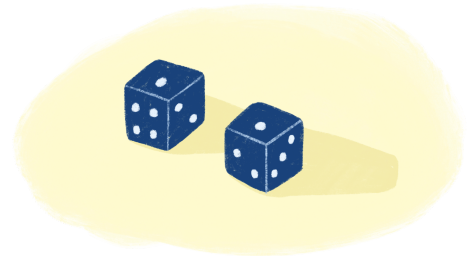
4 out of 10 DEA-tested fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills contain lethal doses of fentanyl.²



Mixing drugs greatly increases the chances of overdose.

Combining opioids with other medicines or chemicals, such as benzodiazepines or other psychotropic medications, increases the chances of overdose.⁴

Naloxone, which reverses the effects of opioids, may not work for someone who has taken multiple substances.⁵



Death from overdose is more likely when people use drugs while alone.⁶

If a trusted person is not present, there are remote options:

- **Never Use Alone** is a 24/7 service where volunteers with lived experience stay on the phone and call for help in the event of emergency. **National Line: 1(800) 484-3731**
- Smartphone apps are being used to prevent overdose deaths.⁷



¹Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). (2021). [Drug fact sheet](#).

²DEA. (2021). [One pill can kill: Toolbox](#).

³DEA. (2016, September 22). [DEA issues carfentanil warning to police and public](#) [Press release].

⁴Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2018). [Opioid overdose prevention toolkit](#). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p.1.

⁵Compton, W. M., Valentino, R. J., & DuPont, R. L. (2021). [Polysubstance use in the U.S. opioid crisis](#). *Molecular Psychiatry*, 26(1), 41-50, p. 47.

⁶Dowell, D., Noonan, R. K., & Houry, D. (2017). [Underlying factors in drug overdose deaths](#). *JAMA*, 318(23), 2295-2296.

⁷McQuate, S. (2019, January 9). [First smartphone app to detect opioid overdose and its precursors](#). *UW News*; Marcu, G., Aizen, R., Roth, A. M., Lankenau, S., & Schwartz, D. G. (2019). [Acceptability of smartphone applications for facilitating layperson naloxone administration during opioid overdoses](#). *JAMIA Open*, 3(1), 44-52.