

# Fentanyl Facts for the Win: Get informed. Get talking.

## Get in the know for a winning talk about Fentanyl.

Even if your teen is not experimenting with or using substances, **talking about fentanyl and prescription drugs can help them understand the risks and feel safe coming to you with questions.** We're here to help you learn!

### What is Fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a powerful, synthetic opioid medication that healthcare professionals often use to treat pain, that when used without a prescription can be dangerous. Illicit fentanyl can be used on its own, but it is commonly found in many other drugs and counterfeit pills made to look like real medications, such as Adderall, Xanax, Percocet, and Oxycontin.

Fentanyl comes in powder form, which is what allows it to easily be added to or mixed in with other drugs. It is very difficult to know if a drug or pill contains fentanyl because you cannot see it, smell it, or taste it, which can make anyone vulnerable to an overdose. It is often impossible to tell the difference between real and fake medications, so young people shouldn't take pills from friends, even if they say they are real. They should never use prescription medications that aren't prescribed to them – even if they come from a friend or relative.

You can also help your teen stay safe by always keeping prescription medications in a safe place.

### What Does Fentanyl Look Like?

Fentanyl is a white powder with no taste or smell, and it is very difficult to know if a drug has fentanyl added to it. Because fentanyl is often added to other substances, people who use those substances may unintentionally use fentanyl without knowing it. Fentanyl can cause an overdose, even in small amounts. That's why it is important to know the risks and talk to your teen about ways to stay safe.

### Overdose Safety

Help your teen know what to do when someone is showing signs of an overdose, including:

- Very small pupils
- Limp body
- Unresponsive and unable to talk
- Pale, gray, or bluish skin, lips, or nails
- Cold or clammy skin
- Breathing has slowed down or stopped
- Very sleepy or passing out
- Snoring, choking, or gurgling sounds
- Muscle spasms or locked, rigid arms or legs
- Rigid chest or ribs
- Call 911 immediately.
- If you have naloxone, use it.
- Stay with them, help them stay awake, and provide rescue breaths if needed.
- Lay the person on their side to prevent choking.
- Wait for emergency responders to arrive.
  - In Colorado, you're protected by the 911 Good Samaritan Law when helping in an overdose situation.

## Help is Available

If you're worried about your teen or their friends experimenting with substances that may contain fentanyl, talk to them about available resources.

Let them know you're a safe and supportive person for questions about staying safe or getting help.

This can include sharing information about naloxone, fentanyl test strips, and treatment services.

- In a crisis, call 911 or contact [Colorado Crisis Services](#) at 1-844-493-8255 or text "TALK" to 38255.
- Find meaningful mental and behavioral health care options through [Own Path](#).
- [CO Wellness Recovery](#) is a free guide for mental wellness and addiction recovery.
- [I Matter](#) connects young people (ages 11 and older) to free and confidential virtual counseling sessions with professional therapists for both individual outreach and parental support.

## Important to Know

Naloxone is a safe way to reverse opioid overdose, including those from fentanyl.

Having and knowing how to use naloxone can help save a life. Naloxone is available at most pharmacies and is often covered by insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid (if it is not in stock, they can order it for you within a few days).



Having naloxone and knowing how to use it does not mean that a person uses drugs or intends to use drugs, nor does community access to naloxone encourage or increase substance use.



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## Key Tip

Talking about substance use does not make it more likely for young people to try substances. Knowing about the risks can help keep them safe.