



Oregon-Idaho HIDTA ISACC

Information Sharing and Analytical Coordination Center

October 5, 2022

Bulletin #: ISACC 2022-003

PUBLIC SAFETY / SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Xylazine Combined with Fentanyl Creates Increased Overdose Risk

(U) The Oregon-Idaho High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Information Sharing and Analytical Coordination Center (ISACC) is monitoring use trends of the misuse of fentanyl. An emerging threat is the use of xylazine, an animal tranquilizer, which is not a controlled substance, nor intended for human consumption, as an adulterant with fentanyl.

(U) Xylazine, called “tranq” by users, is combined with fentanyl to alter or increase the effects of fentanyl use. According to open-source research, xylazine as a recreational drug has been well documented in Puerto Rico since the early 2000s, and more recently been attributed to opioid-related overdoses in the northeast region of the United States. Xylazine has been discovered in both powder fentanyl and heroin as well as counterfeit pain pills over the past several years, according to the Massachusetts Drug Supply Stream.¹

(U) Oregon and Idaho law enforcement drug seizures submitted for laboratory analysis in the past year has identified xylazine present in several submissions. Harm reduction professionals in Oregon have also reported the recreational use/abuse of xylazine by people who use drugs within the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region. With drug overdose deaths surging in the region, reports of xylazine combined with fentanyl pose an increased risk to drug users.

(U) According to various open-source reports, adverse reactions to the use of xylazine include:

- Blackouts
- Blurry vision
- Disorientation or feelings of drowsiness
- Respiratory depression
- Coma
- Skin ulcers and abscesses
- Hypotension or lowered blood pressure

(U) Public Health Awareness

(U) Although xylazine is not an opioid, it is commonly found as an adulterant for fentanyl and heroin, so the use of naloxone may still be beneficial in reversing the opioid overdose.² Naloxone is widely available in Oregon and Idaho and can be obtained from a prescribing doctor or local pharmacist for a naloxone prescription. Under Oregon and Idaho state laws, anyone can ask for a naloxone prescription, even if the intended use is for another person.

¹ [MA Warning on Xylazine in Heroin, Fentanyl – NBC Boston](#)

² [Xylazine | National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\) \(nih.gov\)](#)



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(U) Oregon residents can find locations that distribute naloxone here: [Oregon Naloxone Distribution Locations](#)
Idaho residents can find locations that distribute naloxone here: [Idaho Naloxone Distribution Locations](#)

(U) If a person is suspected to be overdosing, the following steps should be taken:

- Call 911 for medical assistance
- Give naloxone. Even if the drug causing the overdose is unknown
- Administer rescue breathing if the victim is not breathing
- Remain with the victim until medical personnel arrive

(U) If someone is ready for treatment, they can call the Alcohol and Drug Help Line (1-800-923-4357) or referred to their local syringe service program. Additional information on fentanyl can be found at:

Oregon Health Authority's [Fentanyl Facts webpage](#)

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare [Behavioral Health webpage](#)

All information provided in this bulletin has been obtained through open-source research. Additional information related to seizures of xylazine or any drug combination containing xylazine in Oregon or Idaho can be directed to Oregon-Idaho HIDTA ISACC Manger Cam Strahm at cam.strahm@dpsst.oregon.gov or Strategic Threat Analyst Terra Duncan at terra.duncan@dpsst.oregon.gov

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