

Drug & Safety Overview

By: La Banda Que Manda



**NATIONAL
HARM REDUCTION
COALITION**

THE HARM REDUCTION **APPROACH**

Harm reduction utilizes a spectrum of strategies to reduce the negative consequences associated with drug use, sex work, and other behaviors.

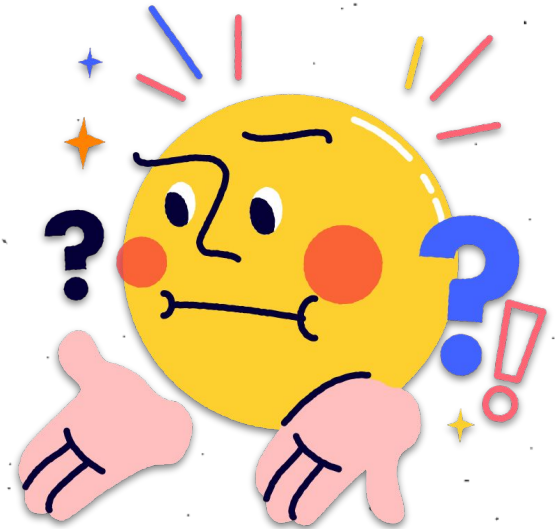
**SAFER
TECHNIQUES**

**MANAGED
USE**

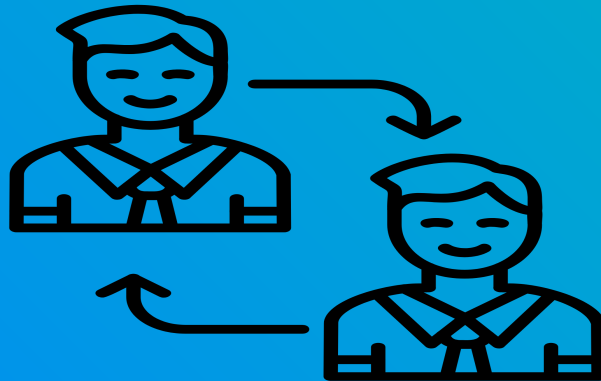
ABSTINENCE

What is a **drug**?

- Any substance that alters your mind
- Can result in dependence when used continuously or excessively (withdrawal symptoms occur when use is stopped)
- Legal or illegal, but this has little to do with its potential for dependence or harm



Commonly used Drugs



Heroin

Onset of Effects

- Inhaled: 1 - 3 minutes
- Smoked: 10 - 30 seconds
- Injected 10 - 20 seconds
- Booty Bump: 1 - 3 minutes

Duration of Effects

Depending, it can last about 3 - 4 hours



Fentanyl

- Synthetic opioid
- About 50x stronger than heroin
- Extremely fast-acting
- Leading opioid for fatal overdoses
- Is being found mixed into heroin
- Can be mixed into other drugs that aren't opioids (ex, pressed in pill form)



**Fentanyl Crystals and Pills.
Foto: DEA.gov**

Heroin vs. Fentanyl

- **Powder with light brown color (NY/New England)**
- **If tasted by finger, has a bitter, metallic aftertaste**
- **Produces a warm, fuzzy sensation in the body**
- **High lasts longer than fentanyl**

- **Lighter in color**
- **Sweet to the taste**
- **Body sensations include an initial rush, and pins and needles, especially in the head/neck**
- **Shorter and more intense high**

Xylazine

**Xylazine is a tranquilizer used on animals by veterinarians,
that is being used to cut heroin and fentanyl.**

Powder Cocaine

- White-off-white color
- Powder
- Flaky
- Water soluble
- Can be absorbed through mucous membrane: nose, mouth, anus



Cocaine/Crack

Onset of Effects

- Inhaled: 1-2 seconds
- Injected: less than 30 seconds
- Smoked within a second
- Booty bumps: 1 - 2 minutes

Duration of Effects

- Snorting cocaine lasts up to 60 minutes
- Smoking crack lasts between 5 - 15 minutes
- People who inject cocaine inject 3x more than people who inject heroin (*the high lasts much shorter period of time*)



foto: DEA.gov

Methamphetamine



Ice Methamphetamine Bag. foto: DEA.gov

Onset of Effects

- Smoked: 5 - 10 seconds
- Injected: 10 - 20 seconds
- Inhaled: 15 - 30 seconds
- Swallowed: about 30 min

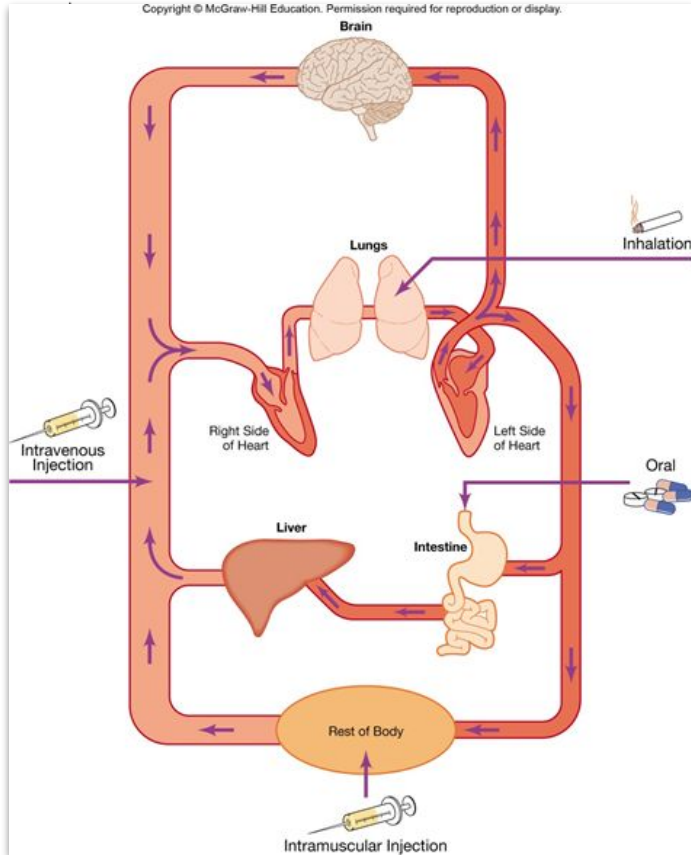
Duration of Effects

- Typically lasts 4 - 12 hours
- Effects last longer when larger quantities are consumed

Safer Techniques



Routes of Administration



Snorting: Up the nose

Smoking: Mouth to lungs

Swallowing: Mouth to stomach

Booty Bumping/Plugging: inserted rectally

Injecting: with a needle to inject into the body.

Snorting

Risks

- Can cause nasal damage by destroying the mucus membrane of the septum*
 - **the tissue between your two nostrils*
- Long term use can put a hole through your septum
- May damage sense of smell

Safer Snorting

1) Prepare your nose

- Rinse your nose out before and after you snort
- Alternate nostrils for drug use

2) Prepare the drugs

- Crush the powder as fine as possible
- Cut your straw in half to avoid sharing same device
- Make a new start with paper or post-it

3) After-care

- Rinse inside of nose with water about 10 minutes after you snort
- Do not use antiseptic sprays up your nose unless a doctor tells you to
- Seek treatment if you get a sinus infection or sores up nose won't go away

Safer Crack Smoking

- Use your own glass pipe
- Use a rubber mouthpiece
- Use a chore boy or pipe screen
- Use a wooden pusher
- Move the flame along the stem
- Let the pipe cool between hits
- Keep airflow in the room

**Use Your Own Snorting Straws
and Crack Pipes.**



Safer Methamphetamine Smoking

- Clean your hands and the pipe with alcohol pads
- Put your crystal meth into your pipe and tap the pipe until the drugs move down into the bowl
- Apply heat to the bowl and keep moving the heat source around
- Inhale slowly and exhale immediately, **do not hold in crystal meth smoke**
- Clean your pipe, burn off the residue and clean it with alcohol pads

Safer Booty Bumping Process

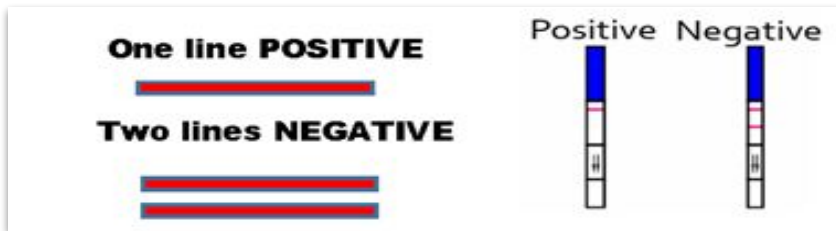
- Fill a 1ml syringe with drug solution
- Add a small amount of lube to the end of the syringe
- While standing,
 - insert slowly approximately 1 half the length of the syringe,
 - press the plunger down slowly,
 - and then remove the syringe
- It is important to be relaxed so that there is no leakage

Fentanyl Test Strips

- Many people and organizations are repurposing urine test strips to detect fentanyl in the drug supply
- Strips can be purchased from DanceSafe individually or from BTNX in bulk. Cost is about \$1/strip when bought from BTNX in bulk
- Available at some harm reduction programs as well as online

Fentanyl Test Strips: Heroin/Cocaine

- Add sterile water to your empty baggie or the cooker you just used to prep - Mix well!!!
**Load your shot first! Only test your rinse water!
- Dip the test strip in the water in up to the first line and hold for 15 seconds.
- Place test strip on sterile surface or across top of cooker












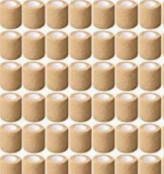


Fentanyl Test Strips: Meth/MDMA



- Use one teaspoon water per 10 mg using a 10mg scoop.
- All other powders is 1 teaspoon per 50mg
- Don't test full shards or pieces of shards
- Test Residue of drug instead

Affordable Wound Care Kit Content

 <p>HEALQU Sterile Gauze Pads</p>	 <p>SIONBIOTEXT White Petrolatum</p>
\$11.99	\$24.46
Add to Cart	Add to Cart
 <p>Non-Adherent Pads</p>	 <p>Non-Adherent Pad</p>
\$28.25	\$13.99
Add to Cart	Add to Cart
 <p>Wound Dressing</p>	 <p>Wound Dressing</p>

 <p>XEROFORM Dressing</p>	 <p>SIONBIOTEXT White Petrolatum</p>
\$27.99	\$22.92
Add to Cart	Add to Cart
 <p>Fabric Adhesive Bandages</p>	 <p>HEALQU Sterile Gauze Pads</p>
\$6.99	\$28.98
Add to Cart	Add to Cart
 <p>HEALQU Sterile Gauze Pads</p>	 <p>SIONBIOTEXT White Petrolatum</p>

**That was the what.
This is the how?**





**Genuine involvement of directly impacted people
in service design & delivery**

**Genuine
involvement of
directly
impacted people
in service
design &
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**"Nothing about
us without us"**

- How?
- Treat them as the experts. Promote them as the leaders.
- Trainings and support to be those leaders (no lip service).
- Program design (needs assessments).
- Program delivery (hiring PWUD).
- Program evaluation (focus groups/train PWUD in research & evaluation).

*How are you currently involving PWUD?
What could you be doing more of?*



Talking about drug use?

- **Who are the real experts?**
- **How we ask?**
- **Caring curiosity?**
- **How we offer information?**
- **How we answer questions?**

Talking about Drug Use: Caring Curiosity

- *"Are you struggling to find a vein?"*
- *"Have you ever tried a different sized needle?"*
- *"How do you prefer to shoot or take your drugs?"*
- *"Would you like to take a few different sizes to try?"*
- *"Do you ever need to re-use your needle?"*
- *"If you re-use do you have enough bleach to rinse them out?"*
- *"When you shoot up, where can you get your water from?"*
- *"Can I leave you with a few more so you don't have to re-use as often"*



Workforce Competence & Safety

- Training : what do you need more of?
- Ask & Listen to participants: they are the experts
- Outreach and the makeup of your team. Are you able to reach ALL communities?
- Boundaries & self care
- Needlestick prevention & exposure control planning
- Anything else?





Experts corner:

“What would you add from your programs about how you engage folks in providing safer drug use education?”



Experts corner:

**The importance of drug
checking?**

Harm Reduction Approach in Medical Care

- Develop open communication and trust
- Education and support
- Do not threaten or catastrophize
- Start where the client wants to start
- Promote agency over body and health decisions, avoid re-traumatizing



10 minute break



Xylazine

Xylazine is a tranquilizer used on animals by veterinarians, that is being used to cut heroin and fentanyl.

- Medical examiner's in various states does not test for Xylazine
- Causing wounds that providers are having a hard time treating or refuse to treat
- It's not an opioid so narcan does not work on it but is still recommended

What is Xylazine (Tranq Dope)?

- **Pharmacology:** α -2 agonist, unscheduled veterinary tranquilizer, clonidine analog
- **Physical Impact:** prolonged and profound sedation, muscle relaxant; may cause hypotension, bradycardia; profound mental status depression may impact airway, some evidence of increased risk of overdose; vasoconstriction effects may be related to wounds
- **Clinical Presentation:** Prolonged sedation, necrotic wounds that may not be associated with injection sites, withdrawal syndrome

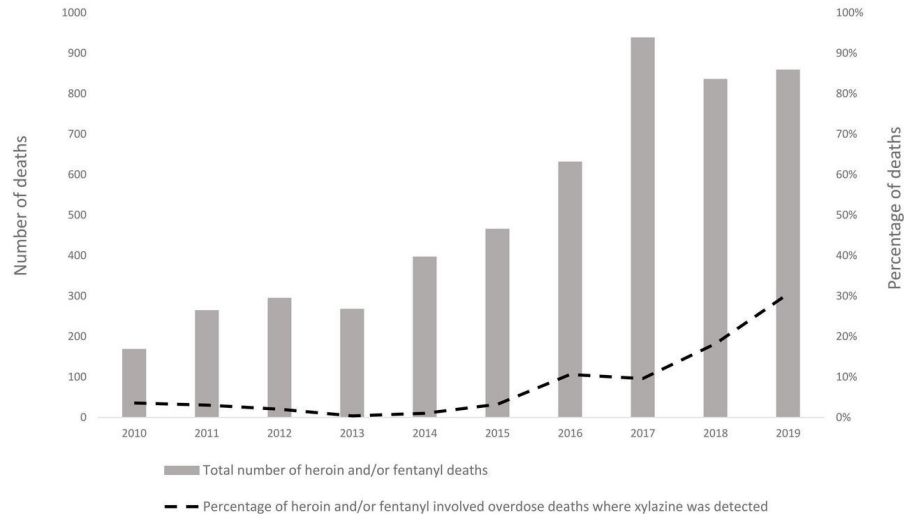
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Xylazine: a deeper dive

- **History of how xylazine came to be in the drug supply:**
 - PR experience
 - Now its showing up on the mainland
- **Whats are folks current seeing where they are?**

Xylazine in Philadelphia

- First appeared in drug supply prior to 2010, rapidly increased starting in 2016/17
- Xylazine present in 91% of fentanyl/heroin samples in 2021



- **Useful Xylazine studies:**

Xylazine as a Drug of Abuse and Its Effects on the Generation of Reactive Species and DNA Damage on Human Umbilical Vein Endothelial Cells

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4243599/>

The Emerging of Xylazine as a New Drug of Abuse and its Health Consequences among Drug Users in Puerto Rico

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3368046/#:~:text=Xylazine%2C%20an%20animal%20tranquilizer%20that,thoroughly%20studied%20in%20human%20populations.>

Xylazine: a deeper dive

- **What can we do**
 - PR experience
 - Mainland experience
- **Wound care approaches**

Xylazine Wounds

- Often appear on forearms or lower legs
- Not necessarily associated with only injection use or with injection sites
- Can start as a small erosion or blister – early intervention is best!
- Can spread rapidly, go down to tendons or bone
- Often develop significant necrotic tissue/black eschar, drainage, and odor
- Need to debride eschar/necrotic tissue, manage exudate, decrease pain and trauma



Xylazine Wounds – Basic Care

- Cleanse with saline or mild soap and clean water
- Do not use harsh cleansers like bleach, peroxide, or alcohol
- Do not pick at wounds and avoid injecting into wounds, if possible
- Always ok to cleanse, cover with clean dry dressing and gauze wrap
- Covered is better than uncovered; do not let the wound “dry out” or “get air”

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Xylazine: a deeper dive

Muy Importante!!!

NO MATTER WHAT YOUR ROLE IS....

**EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ENGAGE FOLKS IN
CONVERSATION ABOUT THIS TO MINIMIZE THE
HARM!!!**

Xylazine: a deeper dive

Additional resources:

- Amazon wish list
(see wound care)
- NHRC one pager:

<https://harmreduction.org/issues/xylazine/>

- Anything else?

Xylazine: a deeper dive

NHRC office hours recording

- **Pt 1:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KZyDuh4NPAHLcAnZDR4elidZZitoNP43/view?usp=share_link

- **Pt 2:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f7qEqaoAqEVK95CA2wZnXafYubTBwKgm/view?usp=share_link



Q & A time

Thank you!!!!

For more information email:
training@harmreduction.org



Do your little
bit of good
where you
are; it's those
little bits of
good put
together that
overwhelm the
world.

Desmond Tutu

KatrinaMayer.com