

Xylazine “tranq” is in Maryland

What you need to know to stay safe

Xylazine, which some may refer to as “tranq” or “zombie drug,” is being mixed with street drugs and a person may not even be aware.

Xylazine is not an opioid. It is a very strong sedative used in veterinary medicine. It is not approved for use in humans. (Opioids are a group of drugs that include heroin and prescription medications like oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine, fentanyl, and methadone.)

Xylazine is being added to street drugs and **is often found in combination with fentanyl** (a powerful synthetic opioid). It has increasingly been detected in overdose deaths.

Xylazine may be added to street drugs, at least in part, to extend the effects of fentanyl. Not everyone who uses fentanyl is intentionally seeking out xylazine. In some cases, people are not aware that xylazine is in the drugs they are buying and using.

The main effect of xylazine is heavy sedation, so the person who has overdosed will likely be unresponsive. When xylazine is found in combination with fentanyl, the signs and symptoms can include blue/grayish skin and slowed breathing and heart rate.

Naloxone (also known as Narcan) will not reverse a xylazine overdose. However, because xylazine is almost always found in combination with opioids, including fentanyl, **naloxone should still be administered whenever an opioid-involved overdose is suspected.**



Xylazine is associated with severe wounds that spread and worsen quickly. The wounds occur regardless of how people use: smoking, snorting, or injecting. **People should seek urgent medical attention** if they exhibit extreme pain, fever or chills, if the wound turns black, if there is a foul odor, or if they experience bone and/or tissue tenderness or damage.

People who use xylazine heavily and frequently are at risk of withdrawal. Xylazine withdrawal is often marked by irritability, anxiety and a feeling of unease.

Maryland’s Good Samaritan Law (or “Good Sam”) protects those who assist with an emergency alcohol- or drug-related overdose. The Good Samaritan Law also protects the person experiencing the emergency medical overdose. [Learn more.](#)

Overdose Response

Xylazine is not an opioid, however, if someone is exhibiting signs of an overdose, naloxone should be administered. The overdose may have been caused by fentanyl or another opioid. In the case of overdose, follow these steps:

1 GET THEIR ATTENTION:



Firmly rub your knuckles up and down the middle of the person's chest. Check to see if the person is breathing and has a pulse. If a person doesn't arouse from stimulation then...

2 CALL 9-1-1:



Tell them your location and the person's symptoms.

3 GIVE NALOXONE (Narcan) if the person is not breathing:



- Remove device from package.
- Place tip of nozzle in their nostril until your finger touches the bottom of the person's nose.
- Press the plunger firmly to release the dose into the nose.
- Give a second dose if breathing is not restored within 2-3 minutes.

4 SUPPORT BREATHING:



Provide rescue breathing until the person is breathing on their own (at least 10-12 breaths per minute).

- Lay the person on their back.
- Tilt the chin back. Clear airway.
- Pinch the person's nose closed and cover their mouth with your mouth.
- Blow 2 regular breaths, then give 1 breath every 5 seconds.
- Do chest compressions if you are trained in CPR.

5 RECOVERY POSITION:



Roll the person on their side with hand supporting head and bent knee supporting their body from rolling over.

6 CARE FOR THE PERSON:



Stay with the person until medical help arrives. If the person is unable to move on their own, rotate them to the opposite side in the recovery position every hour and keep their skin as clean as possible.



**USED YOUR NALOXONE?
LET US KNOW!**

Scan to report naloxone use.