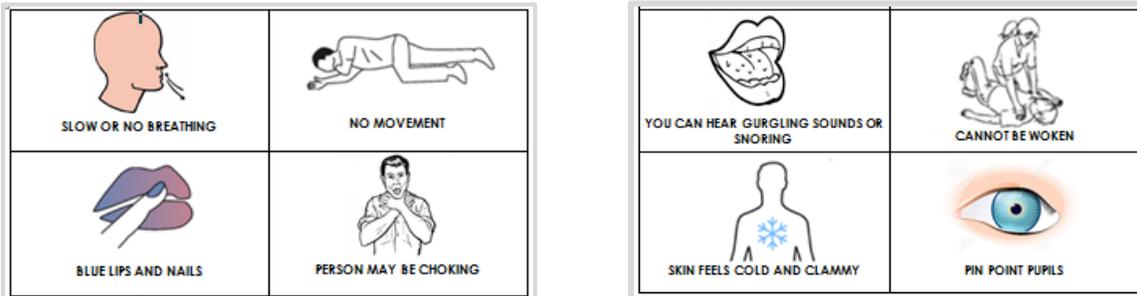


FENTANYL AND OPIOID EXPOSURE IN HEALTHCARE AND EMS

Updated March 31, 2018

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF FENTANYL OR CARFENTANIL OVERDOSE

The signs and symptoms of a fentanyl overdose **are not distinct** from overdoses of other opioids which include:



SAFE WORK PRACTICES

- Avoid direct contact with fentanyl if possible, avoid disturbing the surroundings and avoid performing tasks or operations without the appropriate PPE.
- Areas of skin contact with any residue suspected of containing synthetic opioids should immediately be washed with copious amounts of water. As soon as feasible, skin surfaces should be additionally washed with soap and water.
- **Do not use alcohol-based hand sanitizers, wipes or products or bleach solutions for decontamination** as they do not wash opioids off the skin and may enhance skin absorption of fentanyl analogues.
- Do not touch your eyes, mouth and nose after touching any surface potentially contaminated with fentanyl or other synthetic opioids until you have washed your hands.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while working with a client with known or suspected fentanyl use until you have washed your hands. Ensure client does not smoke with any product during care provided.
- Follow organization's decontamination procedures and make it a standard practice to change clothing and perform hand hygiene before going home.
- Follow organization's decontamination and notification procedures for contaminated equipment.
- Naloxone is a safe and effective antidote to overdoses of fentanyl and other opioids. Healthcare workers should be advised that they may encounter **violence and/or aggression** from patients experiencing withdrawal symptoms following the intake of Naloxone. Ensure that mandatory violence prevention training is current and utilized.
- Report any exposure on a Workplace Incident Report as per organizational policy.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- **It is important to recognize that the exposure level initially selected can change and PPE should be adjusted accordingly based on point of care risk assessment.** (See Risk Framework for additional information)
- Nitrile gloves and industry standard eye protection (safety glasses/goggles) are appropriate PPE for providing care to a patient with a minimal risk of contamination related to an overdose or potential overdose presentation. (See Risk Framework for additional information)
- N95 respirator, long sleeves/ standard isolation gown, goggles and nitrile gloves will be worn when moderate risk of contamination in an overdose or potential overdose presentation. (See Risk Framework for additional information)
- Donn (put on)/Doff (take off) proper PPE as per standard protocol per organizational Infection Control Manual.
- Decontamination of patient will only be performed by those trained in the proper use of PPE as per the Risk Framework.

Fentanyl and Opioid Risk Framework For HealthCare Workers

These recommendations cover examples of common exposures, but are not intended to prescribe PPE for every responder or exposure or discuss all PPE options. In all cases, employers must identify hazards to which their workers might be exposed and provide appropriate PPE to protect them.

	Minimal	Moderate	High
Risk of Unintentional Contamination	Patient is exhibiting symptoms of opioid exposure or there is a risk of dermal and/or ocular facial contact with <u>visible personal amounts</u> of <u>contained or uncontained</u> powder or liquid forms of fentanyl or its analogues.	Risk of dermal contact and/or ocular-facial exposure with <u>moderate amounts*</u> of <u>uncontained</u> powder or splashing uncontained liquid forms of fentanyl or its analogues. *Moderate amount is any amount greater than considered personal use.	Response to a situation where liquid fentanyl or large amounts* of fentanyl products are visible. * Larger than street level volumes
Hazard	Contained: personal use amounts of an illicit substance (potentially cut with fentanyl or an analogue): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pills, capsules, tablets, patches, syringes or blotting paper • Contained powder or liquid Uncontained: personal use amounts of powder or liquid (potentially cut with fentanyl or an analogue) that is not contained	Uncontained: quantities of powder, liquid or smoke considered more than personal use. Note: Smoking illicit drugs (including opioids, such as fentanyl) will release chemicals into the air.	Large quantities of any illicit drugs where there is suspicion of production, transportation or storage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncut, pure fentanyl powder or liquid (or its analogues) or; • A fentanyl storage or distribution facility or; • Fentanyl milling operation or production laboratory
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation or interaction with an impaired person or bystander • Receiving patient of overdose in emergency room or clinic • Provision of medical care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOVE CASUALTY TO AN UNCONTAMINATED, WELL VENTILATED AREA TO ADMINISTER MEDICAL CARE • Decontamination (SEE BELOW)- including removal and containment of clothing with visible powder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPECIALIZED TRAINING IS REQUIRED • DO NOT ENTER HIGH RISK ENVIRONMENT OR PERFORM HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES • NOTIFY LOCAL POLICE OR FIRE
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements Note: It is important to recognize that the exposure level initially selected could change and PPE should be adjusted accordingly.	PPE required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nitrile gloves • Safety goggles • For infection prevention control purposes- apply routine practices and additional precautions DO NOT HANDLE SUSPECTED ILLICIT SUBSTANCES OR DRUG PARAPHERNALIA except as required for casualty decontamination- call a CODE BROWN or LOCAL POLICE/FIRE	PPE required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nitrile gloves • Safety goggles • N95 respirator • Long sleeves or standard isolation gown DO NOT HANDLE SUSPECTED ILLICIT SUBSTANCES OR DRUG PARAPHERNALIA except as required for casualty decontamination- call a CODE BROWN or LOCAL POLICE/FIRE	REQUIRES SPECIAL OPERATIONS TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE SCENE AND DECONTAMINATION OF CASUALTY; SPECIALIZED TRAINING REQUIRED

Casualty Decontamination- Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Long sleeves or standard isolation gown
• N95 single use, disposable respirator
• Safety goggles
• Nitrile gloves

Health Care Worker will:

1. Put ON the required PPE
2. If the patient is in a community location, immediately dial 9-1-1 for assistance. When the patient is in hospital request assistance from manager/designate, as needed
3. Remove all of the patient's clothing and place in a leak proof, bio-hazardous waste bag
4. Thoroughly wash and rinse (using cold or warm water) the contaminated skin of the patient using a soap and water solution. Be careful not to break the patient's skin during the decontamination process, and cover all open wounds.
5. Dry and cover the patient to prevent shock and loss of body heat
6. Take OFF the required PPE

References:

1. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Fentanyl: Preventing Occupational Exposure to Emergency Responders. 2016. Retrieved May 6, 2017 from <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/fentanyl/risk.html>
2. American College of Medical Toxicology and American Academy of Clinical Toxicology (July 12, 2017). *ACMT and AACT Position Statement: Preventing Occupational Fentanyl and Fentanyl Analog Exposure to Emergency Responders*. Retrieved on July 28, 2017 from: http://www.acmt.net/Library/Fentanyl_Position/Fentanyl_PPE_Emergency_Responders_.pdf
3. New Brunswick Department of Health (Sept 27, 2017). Guidance on Personal Protective Equipment and Safety considerations for First Responders, First Receivers, Provincial Correctional Officers and Provincial sheriffs Dealing with Illicit Fentanyl. Retrieved on October 11, 2017 from <http://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/en/MentalHealth/guidance-illicit-fentanyl.pdf>