

XYLAZINE

Key Message

Overdose & Naloxone

If someone looks like they are overdosing, call 911 and administer naloxone ASAP. Xylazine is not an opioid. Since xylazine is usually mixed into opioids, a xylazine overdose may look similar to an opioid overdose, including snoring, slow heart rate, decreased/absent breathing, or being unresponsive. Naloxone will help with an opioid overdose but supportive care will be needed for the effects of xylazine, which is why calling 911 is critical.

What is Xylazine?

- Xylazine, also known as tranq or tranq-dope, is a non-opioid, veterinary tranquilizer that is used as an additive in the illicit drug supply.
- Xylazine can be ingested orally, inhaled or sniffed, smoked, or injected.
- Xylazine is added to the drug supply because it is cheap, easy to obtain and because it enhances the effect of the other substances.
- Xylazine is most notably added to fentanyl-containing products, though it has been reported in other drugs, including cocaine and methamphetamine.
- Many people use xylazine unknowingly because it is added to other drugs.

What are the major effects of xylazine use?

- Xylazine has a sedating effect which can last several hours. Sedation from xylazine often outlasts the effects of the substances it is mixed with.
- Xylazine may cause low blood pressure, slowed heart rate, and skin or soft tissue infection that most commonly occur on extremities such as forearms and legs
- In combination with other central nervous system depressants (most notably fentanyl, benzodiazepines and alcohol), xylazine use can increase sedation and respiratory depression, increasing the risk for overdose.
- Because of prolonged, significant sedation, xylazine can cause nerve and muscle injuries as a result of people remaining in the same position over several hours.

RESOURCES

Call 911 for immediate help for an overdose

For more information on harm reduction and harm reduction strategies, visit <https://harmreduction.org/>

Call 9-8-8 or the Access and Crisis Line at 888-742-7240 to talk with a trained counselor

Call 2-1-1 for help finding local resources including naloxone, fentanyl test strips and MAT treatment

