



## First Responders Exposure: Fentanyl

January 2018

### **Attention: Law enforcement, fire, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS) and other first responders**

If you respond to overdose calls, traffic stops, arrests, and searches, you are increasingly likely to encounter the dangerous drug, fentanyl.

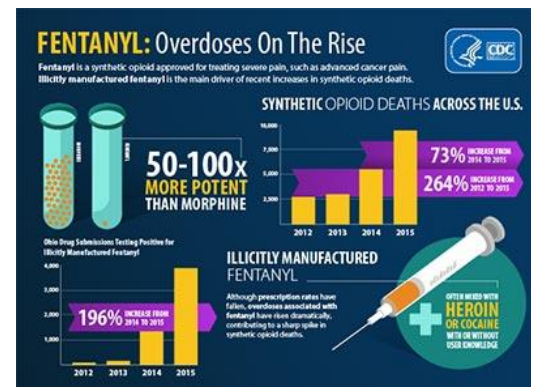
Accidentally breathing in even a small amount of fentanyl powder can cause serious harm or death. Handling tablets, capsules, or liquids can also be hazardous if you get fentanyl on your skin and don't wash it off right away with water.

If you have been exposed to fentanyl you may experience:

- **Slow breathing or no breathing**
- **Drowsiness or unresponsiveness**
- **Constricted or pinpoint pupils**

You can prevent hazardous exposure by:

- Avoiding actions that may cause even small amounts of drug powder to become airborne.
- Wearing gloves when you or others at the scene suspect the presence of fentanyl or other drugs that can contain fentanyl.
- Wearing a NIOSH-approved respirator (e.g., N95 dust mask), chemical eye protection, and any other necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Creating and following policies and procedures that address safety preparedness (e.g., training, work practices, PPE, etc.) and decontamination when encountering dangerous drugs like fentanyl.



Courtesy of the CDC

Use these resources to help protect first responders from exposure to hazardous drugs like fentanyl:

- [Fentanyl Safety Recommendations for First Responders \(whitehouse.gov\)](http://whitehouse.gov)
- [Fentanyl: Preventing Occupational Exposure to Emergency Responders \(cdc.gov\)](http://cdc.gov)

For applicable rules and requirements in addition to training and program resources see:

- [Accident Prevention Program](#)
- [Law Enforcement](#)
- [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)
- [Respirators](#)

*This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSHS) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees to potential hazards associated with work activities. **This is not a rule and creates no new legal obligations.** The information provided includes suggested guidance on how to avoid workplace hazards and describes relevant mandatory safety and health rules. DOSHS recommends you also check related rules for additional requirements.*

Get 1-on-1 assistance from L&I or visit L&I's Safety & Health webpage for training, videos, and other resources to help strengthen your safety program.

Share this bulletin with others in your industry and safety network.

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