

# XYLAZINE: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## WHAT IS XYLAZINE?

Xylazine, also called “tranq” or “tranq dope,” is a nonopioid sedative and tranquilizer only authorized for veterinary use. Xylazine has been increasingly found in the illegal drug supply in the United States and is used as an adulterant (substance intentionally added to a drug) to prolong opioid highs and prevent withdrawal symptoms. Xylazine has been involved in growing numbers of overdose deaths, particularly in the northeast part of the United States. Although not a controlled substance, xylazine is not approved for use in humans and can be life threatening, especially when combined with opioids like fentanyl.

When used in people, xylazine induces opioid-like effects and can cause:



Prolonged sedation



Disorientation



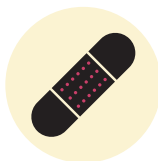
Difficulty breathing



Dangerously low blood pressure



Slowed heart rate



Wounds that can become infected and hard to heal

People who use drugs may use xylazine intentionally for its extended effects and affordability, or unintentionally, when it is added to other drugs like opioids (most frequently fentanyl). **It is difficult to detect as it has no distinctive taste, smell, color, or texture.**

### Should naloxone be given in the case of an overdose involving xylazine?

Naloxone should be given in response to any suspected drug overdose to reverse any possible opioid effects. It's important to call 911 for additional medical treatment, especially since the effects of xylazine may continue after naloxone is given.

### How do I respond if I think someone is overdosing?

1. Call 911 immediately\*
2. Give naloxone, if available.
3. Try to keep the person awake and breathing. Give rescue breaths.
4. Lay person on their side (recovery position) to prevent choking.
5. Stay with the person until emergency workers arrive.

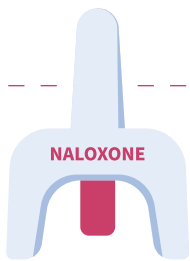
\*A Good Samaritan law (63 O.S. § 2-413.1) was enacted in Oklahoma to provide immunity, under certain circumstances, to individuals seeking medical attention for someone who has overdosed.

# HOW CAN PEOPLE WHO USE ILLEGAL DRUGS REDUCE HARMS OF XYLAZINE AND OVERDOSE?



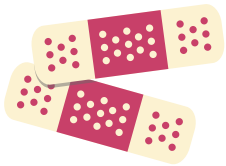
## **Never use alone.**

A trusted contact can help reduce overdose risk by giving naloxone and calling 911 in case of an emergency. People who don't have a trusted contact nearby can take advantage of services that allow people to seek non-judgmental support over a phone or video call when they are using drugs. **Never Use Alone (1-877-696-1996)** is a nationwide service that connects callers to trained volunteers who will gather basic information about the caller's location, stay on the line to support the caller if they plan to use substances alone, and alert 911 if the caller becomes unresponsive.



## **Carry naloxone and learn how to use it.**

Because xylazine is often mixed with opioids like fentanyl, naloxone should be given in response to a suspected overdose to reverse any possible opioid effects.



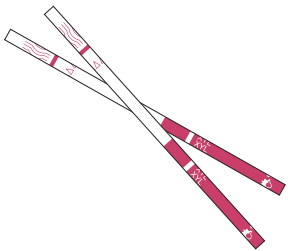
## **Seek medical care for skin wounds.**

Skin wounds may become infected and worsen quickly. When treated early, wounds can be managed with basic wound care techniques. If left untreated, wounds can lead to amputation or become life threatening.



## **Reduce injection-related risks.**

According to the National Harm Reduction Coalition, the risk of infection can be reduced by using sterile injection equipment, rotating injection sites, allowing skin and veins time to heal before another use, and taking drugs in other ways besides injection.



## **Test drugs before using.**

There are test strips available to check for the presence of xylazine in a sample of drugs. When people have knowledge that their drugs contain xylazine or fentanyl, they can take steps to reduce their risk of overdose. **To request FREE fentanyl and/or xylazine test strip kits, email [injury@health.ok.gov](mailto:injury@health.ok.gov).**



**OKLAHOMA**  
State Department  
of Health

**Learn more: [oklahoma.gov/health/overdose](https://oklahoma.gov/health/overdose) | 405.426.8440**

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