

ALLIANCE NEWS



Alliance for Better Communities

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CARFENTANIL: STRONG ENOUGH TO SEDATE AN ELEPHANT, CRAVED BY SUBSTANCE ABUSERS, POTENT AND DEADLY

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Carfentanil, a DEA Schedule II controlled substance, is a white powdery synthetic opioid that drug dealers mix with heroin, cocaine, benzodiazepines and other narcotics to create a stronger drug. It is used to tranquilize elephants and other large mammals, and is said to be 10,000 times more potent than morphine and 100 times more potent than fentanyl alone. Narcan is often not effective to reduce overdoses related to its use, and first responders and law enforcement personnel who merely touch it face significant risk. They can experience dizziness, clammy skin, shallow breathing, heart failure and even death.¹

The CDC reports that there has been an increasing number of synthetic opioid-involved deaths related to illicitly manufactured analogues of fentanyl being mixed in with the substances consumed. Carfentanil is just one of these analogues, but it is considered the most potent. An analogue is a drug chemically related to another, in this case fentanyl. There are several illicitly manufactured fentanyl analogues, and the potency of all of them has not been evaluated in humans, but, as aforesaid, carfentanil is known to be far more potent than morphine.²



Carfentanil was originally synthesized in the early 1970s as a pre-surgery sedative for animals that weighed more than 1,000 pounds. It has no accepted medical use for humans, and it can kill a person instantly. Most substance abusers come into contact with the drug unknowingly and run the risk of deadly overdose. However, some who in-

gest small, or diluted forms of the drug may avoid overdose and become seriously addicted.³

While most often injected when used on large animals, street users who get carfentanil in their batch of heroin may smoke or snort it. Being an opioid, the drug seeks out the opioid receptors in the brain and throughout the body and overloads them. It affects the body much as fentanyl does, only more extreme. Users feel a rush of intense euphoria and a lack of pain, but when the drug wears off a crash typically occurs. Respiratory failure is a major risk from use of the drug as demonstrated in a 2012 hostage situation in Moscow. Russian authorities sprayed carfentanil on a crowd to control the hostage takers, and the gas ended up killing 125 people who died of respiratory failure.⁴

The dangers of street use of fentanyl and its analogues are not confined to large metropolitan areas. As many are aware, an organized crime task force under the direction of New York Attorney General Leticia James recently conducted a two year investigation called “Operation Heat Wave” which resulted in the arrest of 54 people involved in the sale and distribution in Jefferson County of illegal drugs including large quantities of heroin mixed with fentanyl. 850 bags of heroin mixed with fentanyl were recovered by authorities. The multi-agency investigation included the Metro-Jeff Drug Task Force, Jefferson County District Attorney’s Office, Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, and Watertown Police Department. **“This is one of the biggest, if not the biggest drug investigation and detail that I’ve been involved in, and I’ve been in law enforcement for 34 years”** said Jefferson County Sheriff Colleen O’Neil. Attorney General James stated: **“We have witnessed firsthand the devastating consequences that heroin and fentanyl have had on communities throughout New York.”**⁵

Treatment for fentanyl and carfentanil addiction are essentially the same, with MAT, Medically Assisted Treatment, generally considered the gold standard. MAT utilizes alone or in combination

methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone. Methadone prevents withdrawal symptoms and reduces cravings. Buprenorphine likewise reduces cravings and eliminates withdrawal symptoms. Naltrexone prevents drug-induced feelings of euphoria.⁶



THIS MUCH CARFENTANIL WILL KILL YOU.

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Who's at Risk of Carfentanil Exposure

Hidden in Heroin

Carfentanil is rarely sold on its own, rather its secretly cut into heroin increasing its efficacy. This has caused an epidemic proportion of overdoses.

Accidental Exposure

Risk of overdose does not stop at intentionally injecting the drug. EMS workers, medical professionals and police officers are most at risk of accidental exposure by skin absorption.

**THE PANDEMIC'S SECOND WAVE SURGES
ALLIANCE STAYS SAFE ON ZOOM**



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UPDATES PROVIDED ON IMPACT OF COVID ON COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING COUNCIL AND WATERTOWN URBAN MISSION PROGRAMS



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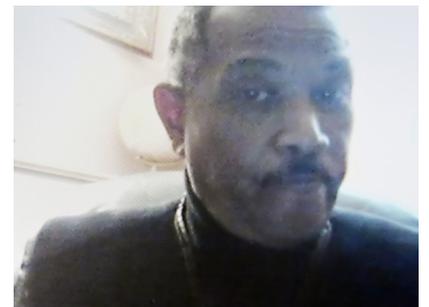
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Students must take risks of marijuana more seriously (excerpted from: <http://dailyorange.com/2020/10/students-must-take-risks-marijuana-seriously/>)

College students must realize the negative effects of marijuana use, which is now at its highest in 35 years among teens and young adults in the United States. As states and elected officials push to decriminalize and legalize the drug, researchers have presented conflicting information about its safety.

“Just like with drinking, you have to moderate and fulfill your priorities,” Bergen-Cico said. “One of the things with cannabis is that it is psychologically addictive. People can be psychologically dependent on it, and they can have difficulty sleeping once they stop using it regularly.”

The risk of becoming dependent on marijuana is often overlooked, as it's seen as safer than alcohol or tobacco. But just because something is less dangerous doesn't mean it's harmless.

