

April 19, 2023

To: Campus Community

Fr: Margaret Klawunn, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Re: **Public Health Announcement – Fentanyl and Xylazine**

IMPORTANT PUBLIC HEALTH ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE UCSB COMMUNITY
REGARDING ACCIDENTAL FENTANYL AND XYLAZINE EXPOSURES

Our UCSB campus and community continues to be impacted by the alarming number of drug overdose cases involving accidental fentanyl exposure. We are deeply concerned about the well-being and safety of our community and we want students to be empowered to keep themselves and our community safe. We all can play a role in reducing overdose tragedies.

Overdose prevention information, including how to obtain and use the opioid overdose reversal medication Naloxone (also known as Narcan), and how to obtain fentanyl testing strips, is available on the [UCSB Student Health Alcohol and Drug Program/Gauchos For Recovery website](#). Gauchos for Recovery supplies Naloxone and fentanyl test strips to students anonymously and at no cost.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid 50 times stronger than heroin and roughly 100 times stronger than morphine. A fentanyl overdose can happen in seconds to minutes. Many people who are exposed to fentanyl had no intention of taking it, but were taking other drugs such as cocaine, ketamine, and heroin that were contaminated with fentanyl without their knowledge. Counterfeit prescription drugs containing fentanyl are often sold online and are falsely marketed as legitimate prescriptions. Many fake pills are manufactured to look just like legitimate prescriptions and may even come in a prescription bottle, but they often contain a lethal dose of fentanyl. Fentanyl test strips are a tool that can detect the presence of fentanyl in a drug, and it is recommended that people test every dose of any substance they intend to consume.

Naloxone is an overdose reversal medication that comes in an easy to use nasal spray and can be administered by anyone in the event of an overdose. It can immediately reverse the effect of opioids in the body. It has no known side effects. It has no effect on alcohol or non-opioid drugs, but there is no harm to a person if they are given Naloxone and have not used opioids. Anyone who administers Naloxone in an overdose situation is exempt from liability under California state law.

[The California Good Samaritan Law](#) protects those who call 911 in an overdose situation from prosecution for most drug-related crimes. The UCSB Responsible Action Protocol, similar to California Good Samaritan laws, applies to UCSB students who make a call on behalf of themselves or someone else needing assistance in a drug or alcohol-related emergency (see Page 6 of the [UCSB Student Code of Conduct](#))

Support Resources:

- The UCSB Alcohol & Drug Program (ADP) is a free, confidential resource for students staffed by licensed mental health clinicians and prevention specialists. To contact ADP, call (805) 893-5013 or visit the [ADP website](#).
- For specific overdose prevention information, visit the [ADP/Gauchos for Recovery Overdose Prevention and Response page](#).
- For information about recovery and peer support services, visit the [Gauchos For Recovery](#) page.

Information about the emerging threat of Xylazine

Just last week, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) designated fentanyl combined with xylazine as an [emerging threat to the United States](#). Xylazine's growing role in overdose deaths nationwide prompted the Administration to make this designation for the first time in U.S. history. Xylazine is a non-opioid tranquilizer approved for veterinary settings, but not intended for human use. Xylazine is mostly being added to the illegal fentanyl supply, but has also been found in other substances like cocaine. Manufacturers are adulterating drugs with xylazine because it is cheaper and said to prolong the "high" of the substance. Xylazine can cause significant and rapidly worsening negative health consequences including fatal overdoses and other life-threatening symptoms.

Please reach out for support and stay safe.

Katya Armistead, Assistant Vice Chancellor/Dean of Students

Angie Bryan, UCSB Recovery Program Manager

Margaret Klawunn, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs

Jackie Kurta, Student Health Alcohol and Drug Program Director