FENTANYL

What is it? A deadly synthetic opioid that is being pressed into fake pills or cut into heroin, cocaine, or other street drugs to drive addiction.

Why is it so dangerous? DEA lab testing reveals that four out of every ten fake pills with fentanyl contain a potentially lethal dose.

What are the physical & mental effects of fentanyl? Confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, vomiting, nausea, change in pupil size and possible respiratory failure leading to death.

How would someone get it? Social media and online activity are ways that traffickers can advertise and make sales of fentanyl. Certain emoji codes are used to communicate. You can find an emoji drug decoding resource on www.dea.gov/onepill

FENTANYL IS 50x MORE POTENT THAN HEROIN

TIPS FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

- Encourage open and honest communication by asking with curiosity versus confrontation
- THESE CONVERSATIONS ARE NOT A ONE-TIME EVENT
- Explain what fentanyl (or any other drug) is and why it is so dangerous
- Stress not to take any pills that were not prescribed to you from a doctor
- No pill purchased on social media is safe
- Talk about an "exit plan" to help your child know what to do if they're pressured to take a pill or other drugs
- Don't react in anger - even if your child makes statements that shock you.

WHAT IF I THINK MY CHILD IS USING DRUGS?

- Share your suspicions with your spouse, partner or someone you trust to help you sort out feelings, questions and a plan.
- Practice the conversation before you talk to your child. This can help you remain calm.
- Wait to talk to your child when they are sober
- Share your suspicions but do not make accusations. If needed, share the evidence you may have that led to suspicions.
- Be prepared for any reaction.
- Enforce the discipline that you agreed on for breaking the rules.
- If the conversation becomes too much, express how much you care and discuss your plan to resume another time when calm.

VISIT WWW.DEA.GOV/ONEPILL FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS
Caregiver Stress
adapted from, https://drugfree.org/article/self-care/

Self-care, which means taking the time to make sure you are at your best. This can mean eating and sleeping well, socializing, engaging in hobbies and exercise, spending time with other family members, and mindfulness practices like meditating and yoga. It may include setting more boundaries with your child and others, for instance, being able to say “no” when you are feeling exhausted or infringed upon. In some cases, engaging in therapy can help to develop an action plan and stay on track.

While some readers will embrace the notion of taking care of your personal needs, others, with eyes rolling, will think, “You want me to do something enjoyable for myself when my world is crumbling around me?!” The answer is “Yes” for several reasons, not the least of which is that you will personally feel better and develop more resiliency.

Benefits of taking care of yourself include:
1. Improved well-being
2. Better Problem solving
3. Modeling ways to cope
4. Relief of physical symptoms such as headaches or back pains
5. Better boundaries

Any little step matters when it comes to infusing your life with something positive in order to sustain yourself for a difficult season.

WHAT IF MY CHILD REFUSES TREATMENT?

Teenagers and young adults who receive early intervention and treatment for a substance use disorder are more likely to remain abstinent with no further problems later in life. The thing is, they need help getting into treatment.

Many adolescents may not actively seek treatment for their drug use or addiction. In fact, many may not see their drug use as a problem. Adolescent/teen brain development impedes them from making logical decisions at times due to their underdeveloped pre-frontal cortex. They may not see the difference between bad choices and good choices let alone drug use and addiction. Teenagers are more likely to push back on treatment. So, what’s a parent to do?

- Clear up any misconceptions about therapy. You may have experienced therapy yourself as a parent and can give your child clarity on what to expect. You may seek out assistance at your child’s school to learn more about the process.
- Don’t make therapy sound like a punishment. This is hard to do for many parents being that a child or adolescent needs treatment options due to drug/alcohol use may have had various discipline experiences leading up to this milestone. Emphasize your desire to help them and focus on a goal that they have which therapy could help them reach.
- Focusing on your teen’s strengths: Rather than overly focusing on your teen’s shortcomings, identify and emphasize their strengths, qualities, and resilience. Remind them that these factors will help them get through treatment.
- Involve your child in the planning. Most of us appreciate a sense of control and the same goes for children and teens. When possible, give your child options when it comes to treatment in order to empower and increase a sense of control. They may pick the location if various clinics offer that or they may pick the days the attend or even what clinician from a practice (outpatient therapy).

Treatment for children and adolescents require heavy involvement from the parent even before beginning services such as the tips provided above.

RESOURCES

SAMHSA’s National Helpline
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Recovery Resource Council
817-332-6329

Phoenix House Texas
214-999-1044

North Texas Addiction Counseling & Education Inc.
817-795-8278

My Health My Resource MHMR of Tarrant County
817-332-6329

Mesa Springs - Innovations
682-345-0425

YouTube Video - Why Fentanyl?
https://youtu.be/2nGdT9Ldaks