

INFORMATION BULLETIN

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE: XANAX & FENTANYL



FENTANYL DISGUISED AS XANAX

In the Metro Vancouver area, fentanyl has been making headlines more frequently as oxycodone, heroin, and other 'party drugs' have been laced with fentanyl and resulted in the deaths of many recreational drug users.

Recently, police have also identified fentanyl in fake prescription drugs like Xanax.

**ANY DRUG THAT IS ILLICITLY PURCHASED — I.E. NOT FROM A PHARMACIST
(OTHER THAN MARIJUANA) IS LIKELY CONTAMINATED WITH FENTANYL.**

(Fraser Health Authority)

WHAT IS FENTANYL?

In British Columbia, unintentional illicit drug overdose deaths increased from 211 in 2010 to an estimated 2,236 in 2021.

One of the main drivers of this increase was the introduction of a toxic synthetic opioid, fentanyl, into the illicit drug market. (BC Coroner's Report, 2022)

- » Fentanyl is an opioid drug (painkiller) that is prescribed by medical professionals, BUT is now being made and sold illegally.
- » Fentanyl is odorless and tasteless. The high potency of fentanyl greatly increases risk of overdose, especially if a person who uses drugs is unaware that a powder or pill contains fentanyl.
- » In 2021, illicit fentanyl was detected in 354 drug overdose deaths among 15-29 year-olds in BC. (BC Coroner)

WHAT IS XANAX?

Xanax is a medication from the benzodiazepine family that functions as a central nervous system depressant.

It is commonly prescribed for generalized anxiety disorder, anxiety associated with depression, and panic disorder.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Xanax is sold as pills, tablets, and liquid.

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE HEAR ABOUT XANAX?

That prescription tranquilizers, such as Xanax, can cause euphoria.

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Research suggests that one of the most important factors in healthy child development is a strong, open relationship with a parent or trusted adult.

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT PARENTS TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN
ABOUT THE INCREASING DANGERS WITH EXPERIMENTING WITH DRUGS.**

It may help to keep in mind that your child may also feel uncomfortable bringing up the subject of drug use.

[LEARN MORE: WWW.HERETOHELP.BC.CA](http://WWW.HERETOHELP.BC.CA)

MORE INFO

[HTTPS://DRUGFREE.ORG/DRUG/XANAX/](https://drugfree.org/drug/xanax/)

[BC CORONERS SERVICE REPORT: A REVIEW OF ILLICIT DRUG TOXICITY DEATHS \(MARCH 2022\)](#)