

Get Tested. Get Treated. Get Cured.

# HCV & Harm Reduction

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## FENTANYL

Fentanyl is a strong, synthetic opioid pain medication. Fentanyl is used medically to treat pain. It comes in the form of patches on the skin and can also be injected, smoked, snorted or taken under the tongue. The most severe side effects include diarrhea, nausea, constipation, dry mouth, confusion, abdominal pain, fatigue, hallucinations, anxiety, depression and overdose. The risk of overdose from fentanyl is very high especially if street drugs like heroin or cocaine are cut with it and people do not know. Some drug dealers mix fentanyl into heroin to increase the heroin's strength and increase profits. This is dangerous because the strength increases the dosage unknowingly. Fentanyl works on the brain the same way drugs like heroin and morphine do. It blocks or interacts

with the opioid receptors in the brain that control pain and emotion. When opioids bind to these receptors dopamine increases which leads to feelings of euphoria and happiness. Fentanyl is 50 times stronger than pure heroin. Because of its strong potency, the chances of overdose is much higher with fentanyl.

### Remember:

- Fentanyl is a very strong synthetic opioid that is 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine.
- Street Fentanyl is sold as a powder or mixed with heroin and cocaine.
- The strong potency of Fentanyl greatly increases the chance of overdose from its use.

learn more by visiting [www.hcvadvocate.org](http://www.hcvadvocate.org)

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