



# Fentanyl Safety Information for Law Enforcement.

Fentanyl is a dangerous synthetic opioid, 100 times more potent than morphine; a lethal dose is 2 mg. Law Enforcement and First Responder personnel who may come into contact with substances that may contain fentanyl should take precautions to avoid exposure to fentanyl.

## Exposure Risks

- Life-threatening risk of exposure is through inhalation, contact with mucous membranes, and needle stick.
- Brief skin contact is not likely to result in toxic effects if any visible contamination is promptly removed.

## CDC/NIOSH<sup>1</sup> Safety Recommendations

- Do not eat, drink, smoke, or use the bathroom while working in an area with known or suspected fentanyl.
- Do not touch eyes, mouth, and nose after touching any surface potentially contaminated with fentanyl.
- Avoid performing tasks or operations that may aerosolize the suspected substance.
- If detection of fentanyl is critical to the incident response, only personnel specifically trained to perform field testing should perform the testing wearing appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Wash hands with soap and water immediately after a potential exposure and after leaving a scene where fentanyl is known or suspected to be present.
- Working dogs are also at risk of exposure to fentanyl and should be removed from an area where fentanyl is suspected or known to be present.

The above is only a partial summary of NIOSH recommendations and is not intended for use as a comprehensive policy. Agencies should develop comprehensive fentanyl safety procedures that specify training, personal protective equipment, and decontamination procedures.

## Field Testing Kits Are Now Available

We are starting to see the emergence of field testing kits that detect fentanyl residues or substances along with other drugs of abuse. These instant test kits are able to render easy to read results in 3-5 minutes, which alerts first responder teams to take necessary precautions. The fentanyl epidemic is expected to get worse, and following these recommendations, along with field testing will greatly reduce threats to your team.

<sup>1</sup>. Center for Disease Control - National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety.

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