



OPIOID ABUSE PREVENTION

AUSA Vincenza Rabenn
DEA SA Tony Guzman



What is an opioid?

- Opioids are drugs that are derived from the opium poppy plant or synthetic equivalents.
- Some (heroin) are illegal, some (oxycodone, codeine, morphine, fentanyl) are legal with a prescription.

A Little Science

- When opioids such as pain pills are ingested, they act to increase the effects of endorphins.
- As drug use continues, a person often has to use more of the opioid to receive the same effects.

What Are Counterfeit Pills?

- Drug cartels (in the US, Mexico, and elsewhere) are manufacturing mass quantities of counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl.
- 95% of opioid pills purchased on the street were produced in dangerously unregulated settings by illegal drug traffickers.
- Counterfeit pills also sold widely on the dark web (and sometimes regular web).

Lethal Problem

- 2019 sample found that 27 percent contained potentially lethal doses of fentanyl – which can be tiny (.002 g).
- This number has shot up in 2020: Deaths from these haphazardly produced pills more than doubled in the Eastern District of California in 2019, and on track to climb even higher in 2020

Epidemic in a pandemic

'Opioid overdoses are skyrocketing': as Covid-19 sweeps across US an old epidemic returns

The pandemic is creating the social conditions - no jobs, isolation, despair - that helped enable the opioid crisis to emerge in the first place. Now it's back



CORONAVIRUS

Drug overdose deaths on pace for record year during coronavirus pandemic, CDC says

Street Fentanyl Surges In Western U.S., Leading To Thousands Of Deaths

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Can you tell the difference?



Local Problem

- The Eastern District of California has further reported a total of 60 active Operation S.O.S. investigations.
- In February 2020, one investigation resulted in the seizure of over 20,000 fentanyl-laced counterfeit oxycodone pills.

What are we doing?

- In January 2020, a jury convicted a Fresno man of two counts of distribution of fentanyl resulting in death and serious bodily injury, resulting in a 30-year prison sentence.
- Just recently, the district charged one sentence-enhanced “death resulting” prosecution after an 18 year-old high school student overdosed and died.

Opioids And Our Youth

- Of the 1,513 fentanyl-related California overdose deaths in 2019, more than half of the victims were between the ages of 15 and 35 years old.
- The threat often comes from within – for many teens, the first opportunity to misuse prescription pills is using those found in their home medicine cabinet.

A Slippery Slope

- A lot of people have the mistaken belief that prescription drugs are safe because they are manufactured in a lab and sold through a pharmacy.
- Misusing prescription pills can lead to heroin use – heroin is cheaper and easier to obtain, and produces a similar high.

What YOU Can Do:

- Confirm prescription medication is stored properly in your household, somewhere that is locked.
- Dispose of unused prescription medication to prevent misuse. DEA hosts a Drug Take Back Event Twice a Year (April and October)
- Talk to your kids (resources on next page).

Resources

- DrugFree.org: Parent Toolkit:
<http://www.drugfree.org/the-parent-toolkit>
- Drug Enforcement Administration:
Prescription for Disaster: How Teens Abuse Medicine:
https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov/sites/getsmartaboutdrugs.com/files/publications/DEA_PrescriptionForDisaster-2018ed_508_0.pdf
- National Institute on Drug Abuse:
Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents:
https://d14rmgtrwzf5a.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/preventingdruguse_2_1.pdf
- National Institute on Drug Abuse:
Opioid Prescribing Resources:
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/nidamed-medical-health-professionals/tool-resources-your-practice/other-opioid-prescribing-resources>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse:
Pain Medicine (Oxy, Vike) Facts:
<https://easyread.drugabuse.gov/content/pain-medicine-oxy-vike-facts>

More Resources

- Get Smart About Drugs:
<https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/>
- Choose Your Path:
<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/videos/choose-your-path>
- Disposal of Unused Medicines, What You Should Know:
<https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/EnsuringSafeUseofMedicine/SafeDisposalofMedicines/ucm186187.htm>
- Don't suffer alone, help is available. Call the National Help Line at 1 (800) 662-4357, or find a treatment center near you at FindTreatment.gov
- Medication assisted treatment can ease withdrawal symptoms, and increase your chances of success. Learn more at: SacOpioidCoalition.org