



## Florida Department of Health Observes Fentanyl Awareness and Education Day

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**Tallahassee, Fla.—** Today, the Florida Department of Health observes Fentanyl Awareness and Education Day, reminding residents of the dangers of fentanyl. On May 23, 2025, the Florida Legislature passed House Bill 259, establishing this day as a state special observance to promote awareness and education on the dangers of fentanyl and potential overdoses.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid. Its effects are 50 times stronger than heroin, and 100 times stronger than morphine. Fentanyl is commonly found in street drugs such as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana. Drug dealers also use fentanyl to mimic prescription medications such as Percocet, OxyContin, Xanax, and Adderall. Because fentanyl is nearly impossible to detect by sight, taste, or smell, many users are unaware they are consuming it, putting them at risk of deadly overdose. **Always assume any pills, liquids, or powdered substances you did not get directly from a pharmacy or dispensary may contain fentanyl.**

Fentanyl continues to threaten communities across Florida, contributing significantly to overdose rates statewide. In recognition of this growing public health crisis, the Department is working alongside state and local partners to increase prevention, expand access to naloxone, and equip Floridians with the knowledge to save lives.

### How to Prevent an Overdose

- **Lead with Empathy:** Substance use disorder is complex and requires care, connection, and community for recovery. Encourage people to carry naloxone, seek resources for support, and connect with loved ones and peers to aid in their recovery.
- **Learn the Signs of Overdose and Carry Naloxone:** Recent research has shown that access to naloxone does **not** increase the likelihood to use opioids like fentanyl.

- **Talk to Loved Ones About Substance Use Disorder:** With more fentanyl in the drug supply, opioid overdoses and deaths have risen in recent years. Have regular, open, non-judgmental, and compassionate conversations with loved ones – even if not certain they are using.
- **Talk to your doctor** about how to correctly take opioid prescriptions and ask about non-opioid medications for pain management, if you would like an alternative.

### Signs of an Overdose

- Small, constricted “pinpoint pupils”
- Falling asleep or losing consciousness
- Slow, weak, or not breathing
- Choking or gurgling sounds
- Cold or clammy skin
- Discolored skin, especially lips and nails
- Limp body

### What to Do if You Think Someone is Overdosing

If you suspect someone has overdosed, call 911 immediately. Administer naloxone (Narcan) if available, lay the person on their side to prevent choking, and try to keep them awake and breathing until emergency assistance arrives.

### How to Get Involved

- A [public health and safety alert](#) was also deployed by the Florida Department of Health on July 8, 2022, to ensure Floridians remain vigilant of the signs of overdose. [Poster materials](#) are available.

Floridians can visit a County Health Department for resource support, including free access to naloxone (Narcan).

### About the Florida Department of Health

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.