SCHOOLS TOOLKIT · FOR STUDENTS

Real talk about fake pills.

What fentanyl is, why it's different from anything before it, and how you can help a friend.

2 mg	16%	76%	1 in 4
A potentially deadly dose of fentanyl. About what fits on the tip of a pencil.[1]	Fentanyl pills tested by the DEA in 2026 that held a potentially deadly dose.[2]	Of teen overdose deaths in 2023 involved fentanyl.[3]	Teen overdose deaths showed signs of fake pills.[4]

KNOW THE FACTS

What is fentanyl?

A man-made opioid about 50 times stronger than heroin. Cartels make it illegally and press it into pills because it's cheap and strong.[5]

My friend was fine last time. So it's safe?

No. Fentanyl isn't mixed evenly. One pill can have none and the next can have a deadly amount.[1]

Is fentanyl only in pills?

No. It's also found in powders like cocaine and meth. Any drug that didn't come from a pharmacy can contain it.[6]

Can I tell if a pill is fake?

No. Fake pills look exactly like real Xanax, Percocet or Adderall. You can't see, smell or taste fentanyl.[1]

Where do people get fake pills?

Often online, through social media and messaging apps. If anyone offers you pills online, block them, report them, and tell an adult.[1]

What if I'm stressed and want to feel better?

That feeling is real, and you're not alone. Talk to a parent, counselor or coach, or call or text 988 any time.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If a pharmacist didn't hand it to you with your name on it, don't take it.

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND

How do I know if someone is overdosing?

They won't wake up or answer to their name. Their breathing is very slow or stopped. Their lips look blue or gray. They may make choking or gurgling sounds.[7]

What is Narcan, and can I use it?

A nasal spray that can reverse an overdose. Anyone can use it, and it can't hurt someone who hasn't taken opioids. Many schools and health departments give it out free.[9]

How can we look out for each other?

Make a pact: no pills unless they come from a pharmacy. Know where Narcan is kept at school. Save 911 and 988 in your phone.

Will I get in trouble for calling 911?

All 50 states and D.C. have Good Samaritan laws that offer legal protection to people who call for help. Saving a life comes first. Always call.[8]

Isn't telling an adult snitching?

No. Telling a trusted adult isn't getting your friend in trouble. It's getting them help, and it could save their life.

IF A FRIEND WON'T WAKE UP

1. **Call 911**
   Say your friend isn't breathing or won't wake up.
2. **Use Narcan**
   Spray it in one nostril. No change in 2 to 3 minutes? Give another.
3. **Get help nearby**
   Shout for an adult, a nurse or a coach.
4. **Turn them on their side**
   This keeps them from choking.
5. **Stay with them**
   Don't leave until help arrives.

GET HELP

EMERGENCY
911

POISON HELP
1-800-222-1222

SAMHSA HELPLINE
1-800-662-4357

FIND TREATMENT
FindTreatment.gov

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE
Call or text 988

Fentanyl Families Network
For families who have lost a loved one. Scan to join.

About us. United Against Fentanyl is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that interrupts the use of illicit fentanyl through innovative, bold, and effective initiatives. Learn more at unitedagainstfentanyl.org.

SOURCES

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2. U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Operation Engage, "Seattle" fact page, dea.gov/operation-engage/seattle (2025 and 2026 laboratory testing and seizures).
3. KFF, "Teens, Drugs, and Overdose: Contrasting Pre-Pandemic and Current Trends," analysis of CDC WONDER data, 2023 deaths.
4. Tanz LJ, et al. Drug Overdose Deaths Among Persons Aged 10 to 19 Years, United States, July 2019 to December 2021. MMWR 2022;71(50):1576 to 1582.
5. U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Facts About Fentanyl, dea.gov/resources/facts-about-fentanyl.
6. U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, National Drug Threat Assessment, 2025.
7. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Overdose Prevention and Response Toolkit, 2023; CDC, Stop Overdose.
8. Harm Reduction Legal Project, 50-state survey of overdose Good Samaritan laws, current as of Dec. 31, 2025.
9. U.S. Food and Drug Administration, approval of Narcan 4 mg naloxone nasal spray for over-the-counter use, Mar. 29, 2023.

For education only. Not medical or legal advice. In an emergency, call 911. Updated November 2026.