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## Addressing a Lack of Education Surrounding Fentanyl Use and Recovery

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## Fentanyl and Narcan Information Binder

Authored by SPU Students, March 2023

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## Understanding Fentanyl

### What is fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is incredibly stronger than many known opioids. There are two types of fentanyl. Pharmaceutical fentanyl is used by doctors. It is prescribed to treat severe pain. It is commonly used after surgery and for advanced stages of cancer. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl (IMF) is distributed through illegal drug markets. It is commonly mixed with other drugs.

### What does fentanyl look like?

Fentanyl comes in many forms. Powdered fentanyl looks like many other drugs and can be mixed with other drugs like cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. Fentanyl can be made into pills that are made to resemble other prescription opioids. Liquid fentanyl can be found in nasal sprays, eye drops and it can be dropped onto paper or small candies.



## Common Misconceptions About Fentanyl

- ❖ **Myth:** Fentanyl can be absorbed through skin to skin contact or through casual exposure.  
**Fact:** Incidental skin exposure to fentanyl is extremely unlikely to immediately harm you. Fentanyl can only be absorbed through a prescribed fentanyl skin patch.
- ❖ **Myth:** First responders have overdosed after contact with a fentanyl overdose victim or contaminated environment.  
**Fact:** Most first responders' encounters with overdose victims and contaminated environments do not present a significant drug exposure threat to responders.
- ❖ **Myth:** PPE cannot protect you from fentanyl exposure.  
**Fact:** Worn correctly, Personal Protective Equipment will protect you.
- ❖ **Myth:** Standard precautions for dealing with suspicious substances do not apply to fentanyl.  
**Fact:** Occupational Health and Safety precautions on contact with unknown powdered substances are appropriate for most incidental encounters with fentanyl.
- ❖ **Myth:** Naloxone can't save you from a fentanyl overdose.  
**Fact:** Naloxone (e.g. NARCAN Nasal Spray) is safe and counteracts the effects of an opioid overdose including fentanyl and other synthetic opioids.
- ❖ **Myth:** Feeling sick after encountering a powdered substance is a symptom of a fentanyl overdose.  
**Fact:** Fentanyl overdose signs/symptoms are the same as for all opioid overdoses: slowed/shallow breathing, decreasing consciousness, pinpoint pupils.

## Naloxone Education

### Barriers to Naloxone use:

Non first responders reported barriers to opioid use include “cost, legality, and lack of knowledge regarding distribution locations and indications for use” (Bessen, 2019). Under RCW 69.41.095 any person or “entity” is entitled to obtain, possess and administer naloxone as well as allowing naloxone distribution under a Washington State Department of Health standing order. (Washington state department of health, 2015) This prescription is covered by Medicaid in Washington and can be filled at any pharmacy but must be paid out of pocket if you are not insured under Medicaid. (Washington State Department of Health, 2022) Washington state bill 5195 “requires hospital emergency departments (EDs) and many certified and licensed behavioral health settings to distribute prepackaged naloxone to individuals at risk of an opioid overdose.” (Washington State Healthcare Authority, 2022) How to administer naloxone and indications of an overdose are available in this binder as well as online on the Washington Department of Health website.

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### Good Samaritan Law

RCW 69.50.315

Medical assistance / Drug-related overdose / Prosecution for possession.

1. A person acting in good faith who seeks medical assistance for someone experiencing a drug-related overdose shall not be charged or prosecuted for possession of a controlled substance pursuant to RCW 69.50.4013, or penalized under RCW 69.50.4014, if the evidence for the charge of possession of a controlled substance was obtained as a result of the person seeking medical assistance.
2. A person who experiences a drug-related overdose and is in need of medical assistance shall not be charged or prosecuted for possession of a controlled substance pursuant to RCW 69.50.4013, or penalized under RCW 69.50.4014, if the evidence for the charge of possession of a controlled substance was obtained as a result of the overdose and the need for medical assistance.
3. The protection in this section from prosecution for possession crimes under RCW 69.50.4013 shall not be grounds for suppression of evidence in other criminal charges.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- ❖ **Q:** Does the law protect against any other charges?  
**A:** No, the law does not protect you from any outstanding warrants, probation violation, controlled substances homicide, drug manufacture or delivery, other than drug possession.
  
- ❖ **Q:** If I don't call 911 but I take the overdose victim to the emergency room, will the law still apply?  
**A:** Yes, the immunity applies to any good faith effort to see medical help.
  
- ❖ **Q:** Does the law apply if the person dies from the overdose?  
**A:** Yes, if you seek medical help in good faith, you will receive immunity from drug possession charges. However, if you are the person who gave the victim the drugs that caused the overdose, you can be charged with controlled substances homicide.
  
- ❖ **Q:** Under this law, could someone under age 21 be cited for alcohol possession if they call 911 due to a possible alcohol or drug overdose at a party?  
**A:** The Good Samaritan Overdose law applies even if you are under the age of 21, you cannot be charged possession of alcohol or drugs as a minor if you call 911 to help someone experiencing an overdose. The victim who is underage is protected as well.
  
- ❖ **Q:** Is Narcan legal in Washington State?  
**A:** Yes, it is legal to any person or entity.



## Badge Card Template

# What to Do with Used Sharps in Washington

Washington residents – **except for residents of Seattle and Snohomish County** – may place used sharps in a strong, plastic container – like a laundry detergent or bleach bottle – seal container with duct tape and label **DO NOT RECYCLE**. Place in the trash, not the recycling.

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## Put used sharps in a strong, plastic container

When the container is 3/4 full, put the lid on, seal it with duct tape, and label **DO NOT RECYCLE**.



Have a needle clipper? When the needle clipper is full, it can be disposed of according to your state or local regulations. More information can be found [here](#).

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## Put the plastic container in the household trash – **don't recycle!**



If a trash collector is reluctant to collect a red sharps container, refer them to your [state waste agency](#).

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## Sharps should never be thrown loosely into the trash or toilet

Sharps that retract after use, or are very small, should be disposed of like all other sharps.



# Sharps/Needle Drop-off Locations

- 1 - Airport Way S  
Airport Way S & S Holgate St
- 2 - Albert Davis Park  
12526 27th Ave NE
- 3 - Ballard Brewery District  
Leary Way NW between  
NW Ballard Way & 9th Ave NW
- 4 - Ballard Commons Park  
5701 22nd Ave NW
- 5 - Bitter Lake Playfield  
13035 Linden Ave N
- 6 - Cal Anderson Park  
1635 11th Ave
- 7 - Denny Park  
100 Dexter Ave N
- 8 - Freeway Park  
700 Seneca St
- 9 - Fremont Canal Park  
199 N Canal St
- 10 - Georgetown Playfield  
750 S Homer St
- 11 - International District  
S King St & 10th Ave S
- 12 - Lower Kinneer Park Tennis Courts  
899 W Olympic Pl
- 13 - Mineral Springs Park  
1500 N 105th St
- 14 - Mt. Baker  
27th Ave S & S Winthrop St
- 15 - N 89th St & Aurora Ave N  
8821 Aurora Ave N
- 16 - North Transfer Station  
1350 N 34th St
- 17 - Othello Park  
4351 S Othello St
- 18 - Rainier Ave S & I-90 Trail  
1199 Hiawatha Pl S
- 19 - Ravenna Park  
Cowen Pl NE & 15th Ave NE
- 20 - Roxhill Park  
9250 29th Ave SW
- 21 - SODO  
Utah Ave S & S Holgate St
- 22 - South Transfer Station  
130 S Kenyon St
- 23 - U-District  
NE 47th St & Brooklyn Ave NE



## Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)

### What are MOUDs?

Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUDs) are part of the opiate analgesic drug/medication class. They are primarily used as a pain relief treatment in extreme medical cases. It can also be used to treat the symptoms of withdrawals for people in the process of recovering from opioid use disorder (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, 2021). The most commonly used MOUDs are methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone.

### Are there other names for methadone?

Yes, depending on the brand that is distributing it, methadone may go by other names as well. Alternate brand names for methadone include Diskets, Dolophine, Westadone, Methadose, and Methadose Oral Concentrate.

### Are there other names for buprenorphine?

Yes, depending on the brand that is distributing it, buprenorphine may go by other names as well. Alternative brand names for buprenorphine include Subutex, Suboxone, and Buprenex.

### Are there other names for naltrexone?

Yes, depending on the brand that is distributing it, naltrexone may go by other names as well. Alternative brand names for naltrexone include ReVia, Depade, and Vivitrol.

### What should I avoid while taking MOUDs?

It is very important to avoid alcohol consumption while taking MOUDs because it can react with the medication in your system and is capable of causing death (Lippincott Advisor). It is also advised that you talk to your provider about grapefruit and whether it is necessary for you to avoid it during your MOUD treatment (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, 2021).

### Do MOUDs have side effects?

There are possible side effects that can occur while using an MOUD. Common side effects include *headache, weight gain, dry mouth, mood changes, difficulty falling asleep, and vision changes* (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, 2021). More serious side effects may include *seizure, hives, rash, difficulty breathing, hallucination, low libido, inability to get/keep an erection, and irregular menstruation* (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, 2021).

### Should I tell my doctor about side effects?

If you experience any of the minor side effects that do not go away, talk to your doctor. If any of the more serious side effects occur it is important to seek medical help immediately (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, 2021).

## Is it possible to overdose on MOUDs?

Yes, it is possible to overdose on MOUDs. Symptoms indicating an overdose may include *constricted pupils, difficulty breathing, drowsiness, limp muscles, inability to wake up or respond, cool/clammy/blue skin* (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, 2021).

## Resource Hotline Numbers

❖ **Children’s Crisis Outline Response System (206)-461-3222**

Mobile crisis outreach and stabilization of trained teams who go out to location to help with de-escalation. Teams also work with family to provide mental health and suicide risk assessment as well as provide connections to community resources and services. It is for 18 and under youth and their caregivers who live in King County who are not already enrolled in the King County Mental Health Plan

❖ **King County Mental Health Services: Client Services (206)-263-8997**

Find information about King County’s publicly funded mental health services for low-income people and see if you qualify. Connection with substance use disorder (SUD) and withdrawal management (detox) services for you or family.

❖ **King County Crisis Connections 24-Hour Crisis Line (206)-461-3222**

Evaluation of persons with behavioral health disorders and connections with resources during immediate mental health crisis.

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