



State of New Hampshire Department of Safety

John J. Barthelmes, Commissioner

Division of Fire Standards and Training and Emergency Medical Services
Office of the EMS Bureau Chief
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CLINICAL BULLETIN

Bulletin #	Title			Date Issued
35	Furanylfentanyl Drug Advisory			September 26, 2016
Superseded	Released By	Approved By	Source	
	V. Blanchard/P. Holigan	N. Mercuri	Fargo ND Police	

A fentanyl-related variant called Furanylfentanyl (aka furanyl-fentanyl) has recently been discovered in several states. Furanylfentanyl is an extremely powerful synthetic pain killer that is sold as a very fine powder. If airborne, it can prove fatal to users and responders who inhale it or if absorbed through skin.

Responders are urged to proceed with caution if responding to a call where drug paraphernalia and a powdery substance are found.

Fargo North Dakota Police Department Advisory

Furanylfentanyl is very similar in effect and potency to fentanyl. Little is known about Furanylfentanyl due to it not being used medically and it being sold a “research chemical”. Potency is 50 to 100 times more powerful than morphine. The dose is in micrograms. The bottom line is that it is very dangerous.

Furanylfentanyl is manufactured in China. The manufacturing process is difficult and requires someone with advanced scientific knowledge and equipment. Furanylfentanyl can be ordered via the Internet from a number of “research chemical” websites.

Furanylfentanyl is not currently a controlled substance in state or federal statutes. However, the U.S. Attorney’s Office has indicated that they will prosecute cases under the Federal Analogue Act. The North Dakota Attorney General’s Office is currently reviewing the ND Analogue Statute to see if prosecution is possible under the State Statute.

We have been seeing Furanylfentanyl in several forms in the Fargo/Moorhead area.

First, we have been seeing a heroin/furanylfentanyl mixture. Users are purchasing this as heroin. Users are likely unaware that the heroin they are buying contains fentanyl. Users have heard rumors, but there is no way that users can know for sure what they are getting. Due to users not knowing what exactly they are buying and using, many have overdosed. It is unknown when/where the

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<http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/fstems/index.html>

Furanylfentanyl is being added to the heroin. Below are actual pictures of a heroin/furanylfentanyl mix and straight heroin.



Heroin/furanylfentanyl



Heroin



Heroin

Second, it is pure Furanylfentanyl powder. It is a white to off-white, very fine powder. This can be purchased via multiple websites from producers in China. Users are typically smoking the powder due to knowledge that it is very potent. Users have a false sense of security in smoking fentanyl, as the rumor seems to be going around that smoking lessens the likelihood of OD. This rumor is false. We have multiple ODs and deaths attributed to smoking powder Furanylfentanyl.



Lastly, is Furanylfentanyl in solution. Fentanyl in solution is basically powder fentanyl that is obtained via the Internet in powder form, but dissolved in water. Dealers are using nasal spray bottles, as once dissolved, the solution is used by inhaling the solution in a mist. This appears to be the new culprit for some of our most recent ODs. Furanylfentanyl in solution is basically powder Furanylfentanyl (same as the paragraph above – obtained the same way – often obtained by the same people) that is dissolved in water and packaged in nasal spray bottles for sale.



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The bottom line with Furanylfentanyl is that it is extremely dangerous. It is dangerous to us due to the following reasons.

- The powder is very fine and can become airborne very easily. If stirred up in the air, inhaling it could prove fatal. Also, it can be absorbed through your skin (powder or solution).
- It is a very real possibility of one of us being inadvertently exposed. If we are exposed, death is a very real possibility. The dosage of Furanylfentanyl (or any fentanyl) is in micrograms and any dose ingested is potentially fatal.

It is dangerous to the user for the following reasons:

- The user cannot be certain of what dose they are taking. A dose of Furanylfentanyl is micrograms.
- The user cannot be certain what exactly they are taking. There are no controls in place to ensure that what they buy is what they get. There are no controls in place to know if what they are getting is strong or weak. The user does not know how much powder a dealer has diluted into solution.
- The effects of Furanylfentanyl may not be immediate. Users may inhale a dose, feel no effects, and take another dose in an attempt to attain the high they are looking for. The first dose may have been sufficient, but the effects just were not yet felt by the user. So, the second dose is the overdose. By the time the user realizes they may have overdosed, it is likely too late. They have already ingested a fatal dose.

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- An overdose happens quickly. By the time a user realizes that they may have overdosed, they will likely be unable to help themselves. If the dose of Furanylfentanyl does not kill them, their respirations will slow so much that it will lead to cardiac arrest, which will kill them.

The advice to anyone that believes they have found Furanylfentanyl is you must proceed with extreme caution, if you proceed at all. The risk of exposure resulting in death is very real. If you find what you believe is Furanylfentanyl (or any powder fentanyl or fentanyl in solution), freeze the scene, move everyone away from it, and call the local PD, Drug Task Force, or narcotics unit who should be equipped to safely handle it.

Advisory used with permission from Lt. Shannon Ruzisaa of the Fargo North Dakota Police Department, Narcotics Division

Additional References for More Information

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