



Facts About Xylazine

What is Xylazine?

Xylazine (zie-luh-zeen) is an animal tranquilizer that has sedative-like effects. It's becoming more common in street drugs, like powder heroin/fentanyl, and sometimes coke and meth.

Xylazine is mixed with other drugs to increase the intensity and length of the high. However, it increases the chance of overdose.

Because Xylazine is not an opioid, naloxone (aka Narcan) cannot be used to reverse a xylazine overdose.



However, xylazine test strips are available.



Other names: Tranq, Tranq dope, Zombie drug, and Horse tranquilizer

The Dangers

When Xylazine is injected, it can cause painful skin wounds all over. Sometimes these can take months to heal, and if not treated right away, it may lead to amputation. Xylazine may cause a life-threatening drop in your blood's ability to carry oxygen to tissues. Other symptoms may include: High blood sugar, no/low bladder control, trouble swallowing, shortness of breath, sleepwalking, exhaustion, and really dry mouth.

Overdose

If someone is unresponsive, breathing slower, or not breathing at all, call 9-1-1 and use naloxone. Naloxone doesn't work on xylazine BUT it will help if they have opioids in their system too.

If you give naloxone (Narcan):

- Wait 2 minutes between doses
- Between doses, check that their mouth is clear and give them rescue breaths
- Lay the person on their side to prevent choking

Testing for Xylazine

The only way to know whether xylazine is in your drugs is by using xylazine testing strips. They are not 100% perfect, but they can help protect you.

Harm Reduction Tips

- Avoid drugs with xylazine in them if you can
- Test your drugs for xylazine
- Never use alone
- Carry naloxone
- Start slow
- Because of the heavy sedation that comes with xylazine, be aware of your surroundings, your physical safety, and your possessions



Visit the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board's website at www.npaihb.org/opioid to learn more about treatments, reversing an overdose, and other important topics.