What are drug checking test strips?

Drug checking strips can help you understand what is in a substance before you use it.

Fentanyl and nitazenes are extremely potent opioids that may be added to unregulated drugs like heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine and pills. Fentanyl and nitazenes increase the risk of overdose.

Xylazine, medetomidine and benzodiazepines are sedatives that may be added to unregulated drugs. Xylazine can cause skin wounds that may be difficult to heal. Although the effects of these sedative drugs are not reversed by naloxone, these drugs are often mixed with opioids.

Always give naloxone when you see signs of overdose!

Test strips can detect the presence of these substances, but they aren't perfect. False negative and false positive results are possible. You can still overdose even when the strip is negative. Follow these instructions closely to get the most accurate results.
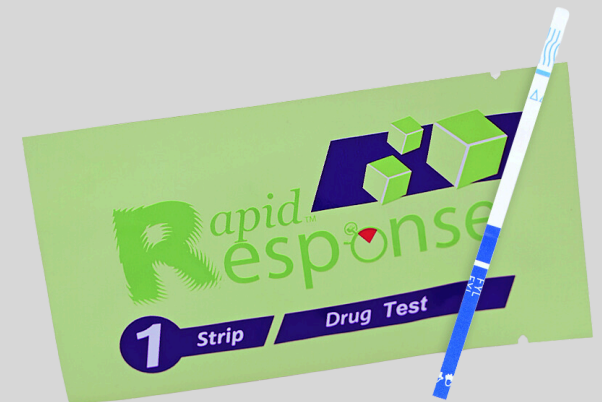
Reducing Risk

Counterfeit pills and products sold as heroin often contain fentanyl in inconsistent quantities. Xylazine, medetomidine, nitazenes, or benzodiazepines may be mixed with fentanyl or other unregulated drugs. It can be very difficult to know what you are getting and how strong it is.

Start with the lowest dose. Go slowly. Try to wait between using different types of drugs.

Carry naloxone, the drug used to reverse opioid overdose. Use FindNaloxoneNowKY.org to find naloxone near you.

If you're using drugs, try to have someone there with you who's not using the same thing at the same time, who has naloxone and can give it to you if you need it. If no one is available, call the Never Use Alone number for support: 1-800-696-1996.
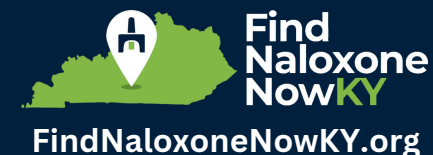
Kentucky Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Kentucky Overdose Response Effort

Drug Checking Test Strips

If you know what you're taking, you can reduce your risk.

Find Naloxone Now KY

FindNaloxoneNowKY.org

Step 1:
Get a sample ready.

Place a small amount of the substance, about the size of a match head, in a clean dry container.

Test only 5-10 milligrams.

If you're testing a pill, make sure you remove different parts of the pill to avoid "the chocolate chip cookie effect."
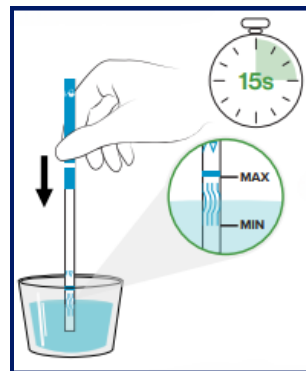
THE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE EFFECT

ONE PORTION OF A DRUG MAY CONTAIN FENTANYL, WHILE ANOTHER PORTION MAY NOT.

fentanyl   no fentanyl

Step 2: Add water.

Pour 1 teaspoon (5 mL) water into the container and stir to mix.

Step 3:
Dip the strip.

For best results, use the strip within an hour after you take it out of the package.

15s

MAX

MIN

Place the wavy end of the test strip in the water and hold it there for 15 seconds.

Step 4: Wait.

Take the test strip out of the water and lay it on a flat, non-absorbent surface.

The strip is ready to read when the control line **(C)** appears and the background is clear, usually after about 1 minute.

Do not read the results after 10 minutes.

If no control line **(C)** appears, something went wrong. Repeat the test.

Step 5:
Read the results.

Two red lines is a negative result. Even faint lines are considered negative. Remember, no test is 100% accurate and the substance may still contain the drug you are testing for or one of its relatives.

One red line on the test strip **is a positive result.**

This means that **the drug you are testing for has been detected.**

ONE RED LINE = POSITIVE RESULT

(T)   (C)

TWO RED LINES = NEGATIVE RESULT