



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.

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Benita McLarin, FACHE
DIRECTOR

Matthew Willis, MD, MPH
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

Lisa M. Santora, MD, MPH
DEPUTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

3240 Kerner Boulevard
San Rafael, CA 94901
415 473 4163 T
415 473 2326 F
415 473 3232 TTY
marinhhs.org/public-health

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY: Local Spike in Fentanyl Use and Overdoses

Background:

Overdose is the leading cause of death in Marin County for residents age 55 and younger. Fentanyl is the most common substance involved in overdose deaths. Marin County Public Health now monitors fentanyl levels in local wastewater.

Current Situation:

During the week preceding September 17, 2023, the concentration of norfentanyl, a marker of fentanyl use, doubled in Marin wastewater compared to the previous week. The following week, Emergency Medical Services responded to eight suspected opioid overdoses, double the usual weekly rate. This pattern could signify increased availability and intentional use of fentanyl or increased levels of fentanyl contamination in other substances.

Providers are asked to share the following messages with people who use drugs:

- Never use alone.
- Start low and go slow.
- Have Narcan on hand. You may need to use multiple doses. Get free Narcan and training at odfreemarin.org/narcan/.
- Test your drugs before using. Fentanyl test strips are available through the SPAHR Center. More information can be found on [their website](#).
- For treatment options, call the Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Access Line (24/7) at 1-888-818-1115 or [visit here](#) for a list of providers offering treatment for opioid use disorders.

Other actions requested of clinicians:

- Recognize suspected opioid overdose and take prompt action. Reversing high potency opioid overdoses may require repeated administrations of naloxone.
- Refer patients with opioid use disorder to [treatment](#), or obtain the capacity to provide Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) in your practice. Learn more [here](#).

Marin County Public Health is monitoring the situation closely and will provide a status update next week.