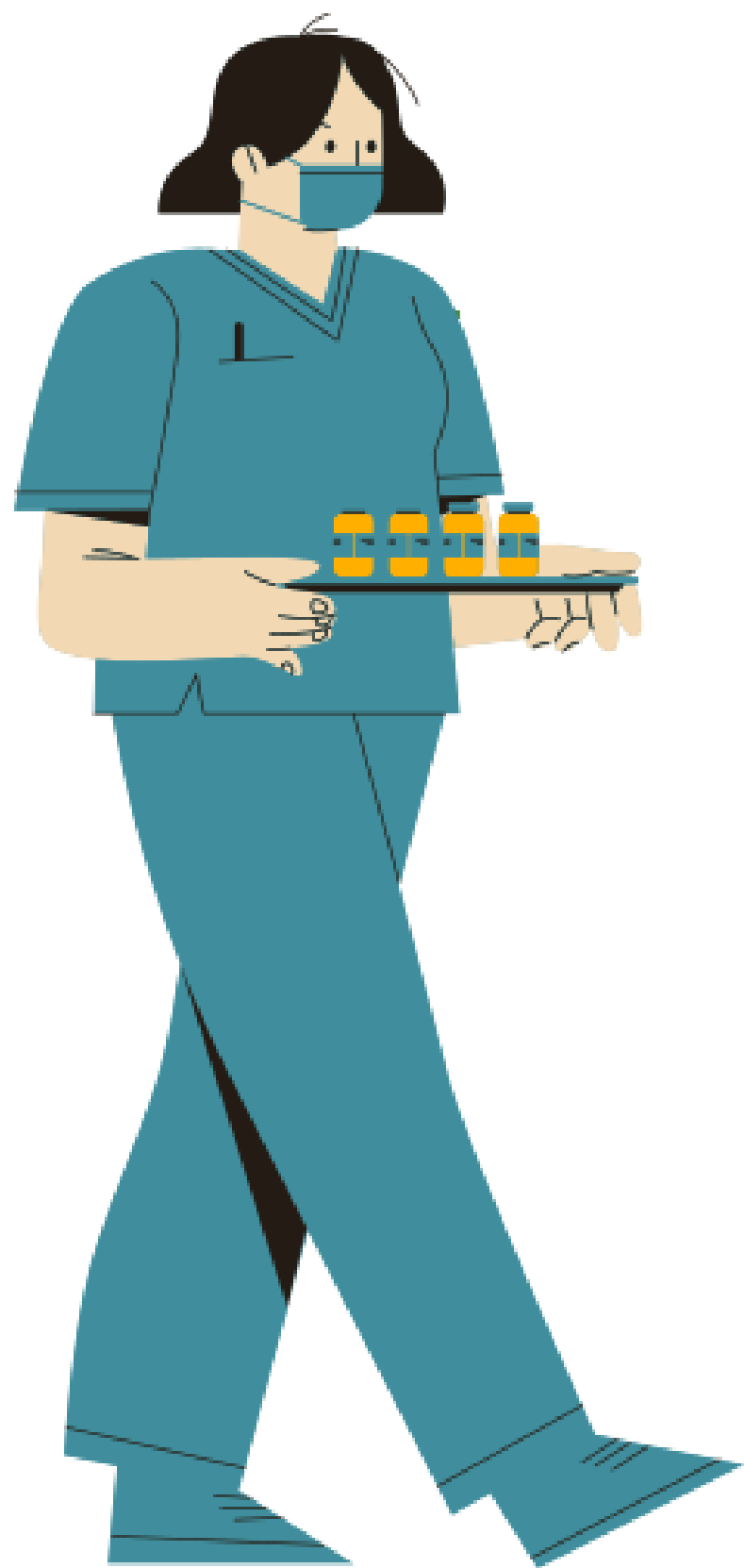




# Understanding Fentanyl: Synthetic Opioids and Oregon's Good Samaritan Law

*(as required by Senate Bill 238)*



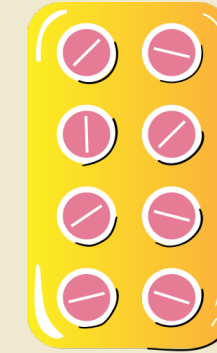
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# Prescription & Other Opioids/ Fentanyl



**Stanford**  
MEDICINE

REACH Lab



# Today, I will:

- Describe fentanyl, and the dangers of fake pills.
- Identify signs of an overdose and how to respond.
- Describe three harm reduction strategies, including test strips, never using alone, carrying naloxone.
- Explain Oregon's Good Samaritan laws.

# Warm - Up Activity



**What have you heard about opioids  
and their effects?**



**What do you want to know about opioids?**

# Warm - Up Activity

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**Opioids are a class of drugs that originally came from the poppy plant, although there are now synthetic and semi-synthetic versions available also.**

**What are some commonly used opioids?**

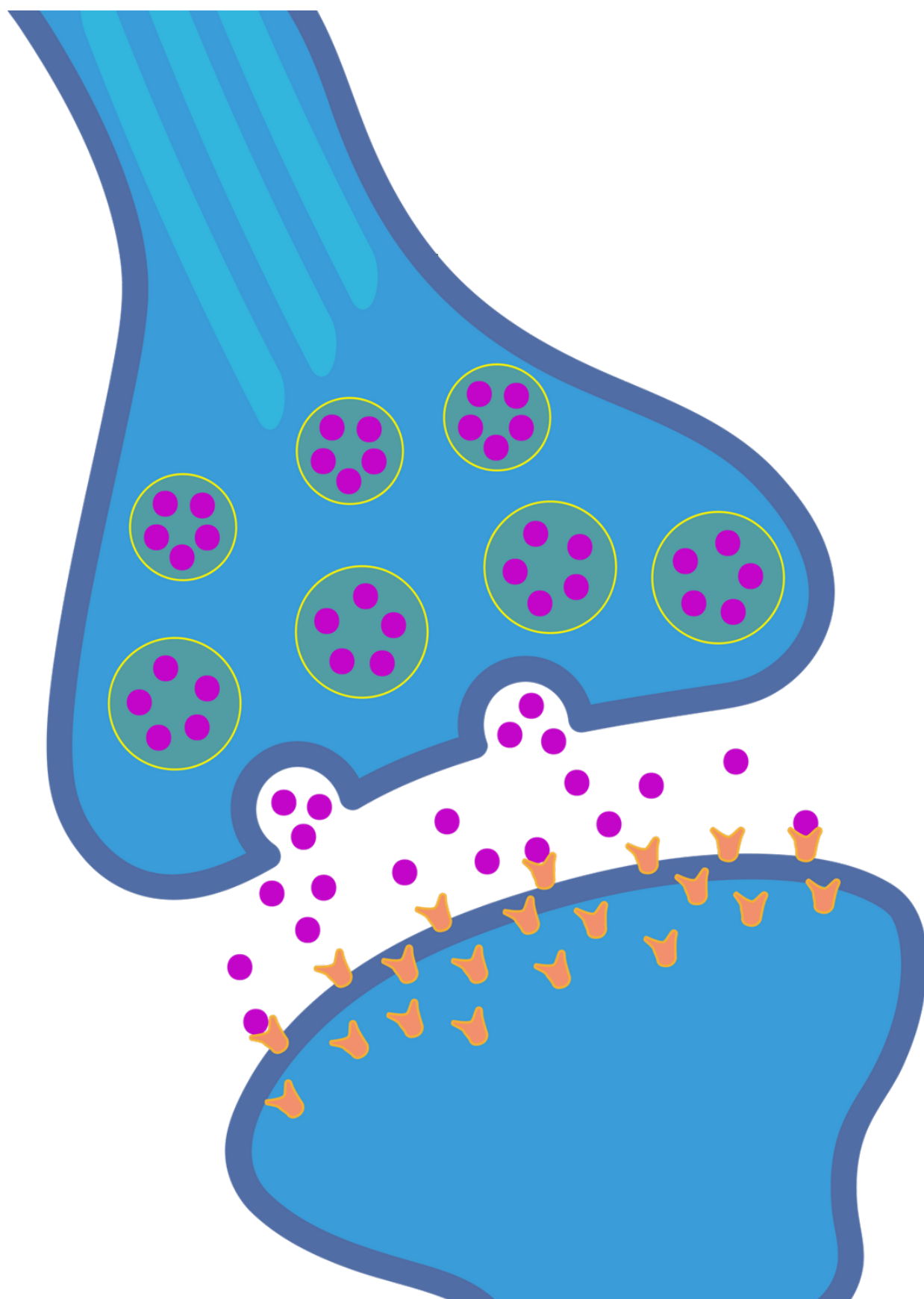
# Examples of Opioids

- Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid
- Heroin
- Morphine
- Codeine
- Oxycodone  
(OxyContin/Percocet)
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin)



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# Understanding Opioids



The opioids class of drugs has been in use since as early as 3400 B.C. to treat pain.



Opioid drugs have molecules which mimic the shape of naturally-occurring opioid system neurotransmitters in the brain.



Opioids may be taken orally, snorted, smoked or injected with a syringe (needle).

An illustration of a healthcare professional, likely a nurse or doctor, with dark skin and short dark hair. They are wearing a white lab coat over an orange top. They are holding a large blue clipboard with both hands. The background is a solid olive green color.

# Understanding Opioids: Drug Knowledge

- Opioids work by mimicking the body's natural pain relief system
- Opioids can impair judgment and physical actions
- Opioids are very addictive
- Injecting is the riskiest method of use
- Sharing syringes can spread infections



# People Sometimes use Opioids to:

- relieve pain and sedation
- have feelings of euphoria, calm, or relief from anxiety



# The Effects of Opioids:

- contracted pupils, loss of muscles and slurred speech.
- nausea, constipation, fall asleep unexpectedly, and itchy skin.
- erratic or slow breathing, or, in the case of an overdose, stop breathing entirely.

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# Potential Risks and Harms of Opioids



- **Overdose** is **common** with any form of opioid, in any amount, and **can be fatal**.
- Risk of overdose increases when opioids are mixed with other drugs.
- Continuous use of opioids can lead to **tolerance**, which means someone has to start taking higher doses of an opioid in order to get the same effect.
- Increased tolerance can lead to **physical dependence** or addiction

## What is it?

- Fentanyl is one of the most potent opioids approved for medical use
- Intended for treating severe pain or for chronic pain patients who have developed a tolerance to less potent opiates
- However, recently fentanyl is often produced illicitly —outside of the legal regulatory system and has contaminated the broader drug supply



## What are the effects?

- Fentanyl's effects are generally the same as other opioids like heroin, but because of the drug's potency, they often appear faster and can last longer.



# Discussion Questions



- What connections are you making?
- What did you learn?
- What other questions do you have?



# Cycle of Addiction



As defined by the [American Society of Addiction Medicine](#), [addiction is a chronic brain disease](#) that affects the brain's reward, pleasure, memory, and motivation and related circuitry.

- Can happen over a short period of time, or can take months or years to develop
- With opioids it can happen very quickly

# Reducing Harm with Prescribed Opioids

- Using opioids not prescribed by a doctor is risky because they sometimes have other substances added, like fentanyl
- Even using opioids for a medical purpose with a prescription can be dangerous

- DO NOT use opioids unless they've been prescribed to you
- DO NOT give others your prescribed opioids
- Use them according to a doctor's direction (dose and dosage)



# Reducing Harm Among Those Using Opioids



- A key harm reduction strategy is to use as low a dose as possible and as infrequently as possible.
- This helps reduce the risk of overdose as well as the risk of developing tolerance, which can lead to addiction.



**REMEMBER:**  
The best way  
to avoid harm  
is not to use  
opioids in the  
first place.

**Tip: Dispose of opioids properly to avoid misuse by others**

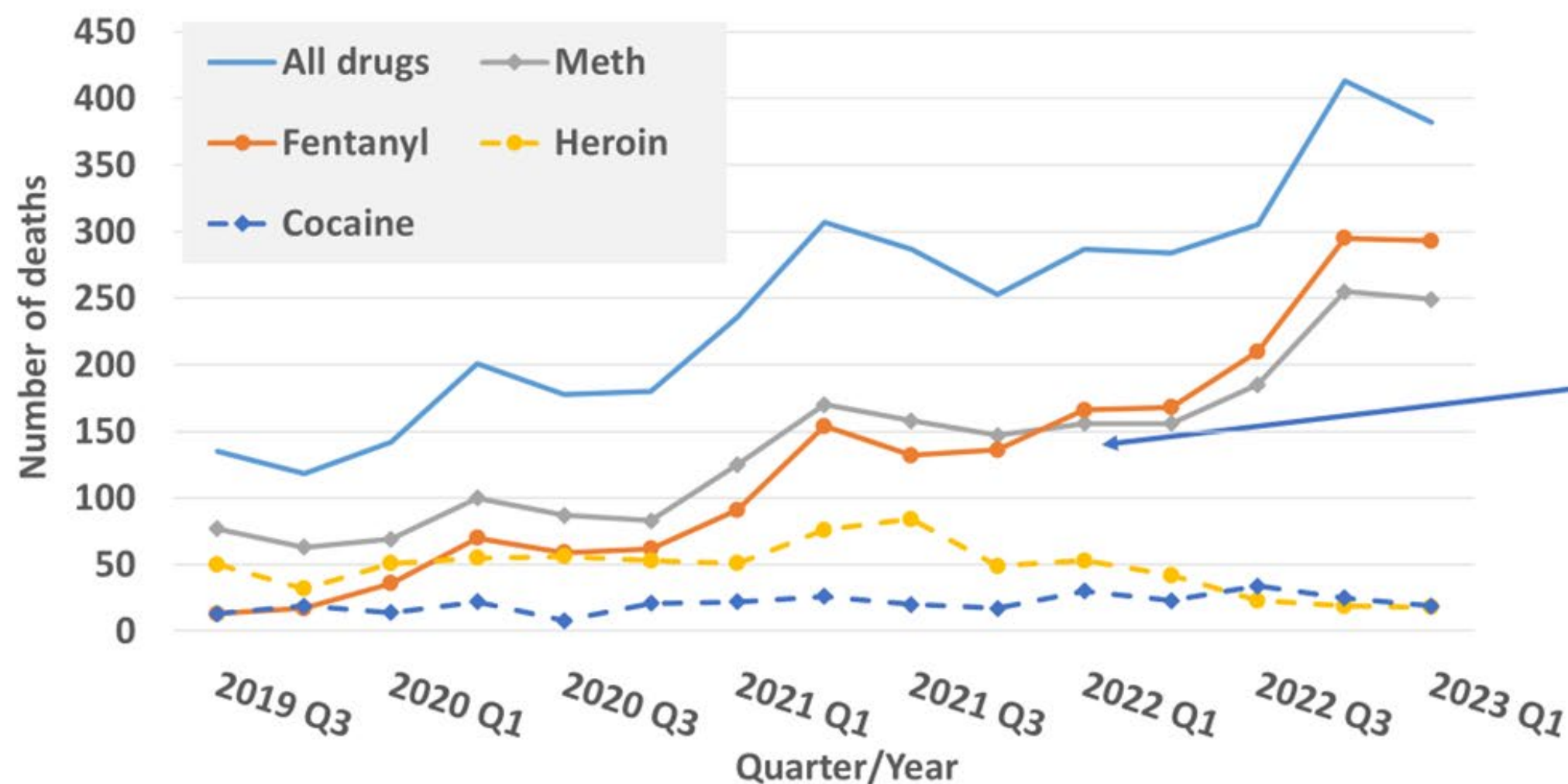
\*Any amount of non-medical use of fentanyl is harmful and can be deadly

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# Oregon Overdose Deaths, July 2019 – March 2023

Unintentional/undetermined drug overdose deaths by drug  
and quarter, Oregon, July 2019 - March 2023\*



Fentanyl deaths  
newly exceeded  
methamphetamine  
deaths in 2022

Source: Oregon State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS), 2023



# Reducing Harm:

## Responding to an Emergency

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# Scenario Discussion

Imagine you have a friend who was offered a pill at a party. They share with you their intention to take it.

- Based on what we've learned so far, what information would you want your friend to have?
- If your friend was going to take the pill, what advice would you give them about reducing the potential harm?
- What would you do if you were offered the pill at a party?

**REMEMBER:**

The best way to avoid harm is not to use opioids in the first place.

# Recognizing an Overdose

Let's review the signs of an opioid overdose :

- Slow, shallow and erratic breathing
- Pinpoint pupils
- Snoring or gurgling sounds
- Unconscious/unresponsive to stimuli
- Limp
- Slow pulse/no pulse
- Pale or ashen and clammy

# Who to Call in the Event of an Overdose

Always call 911 for help.

Naloxone can reverse opioid overdoses, and is carried by EMTs and is available in some schools.

Oregon has a Good Samaritan law. If someone is overdosing and you seek medical help, neither of you can be arrested or prosecuted for:

1. Possessing drugs or drug paraphernalia
2. Being in a place where drugs are used
3. Violating probation or parole or any outstanding warrants related to #1 and #2.







# How to Administer Naloxone

# Questions, Comments and Resources

If you have any other questions, please feel free to put them in our Q and A box and we can address them during our next class.

In the meantime, please know that there are trusted adults and professionals that you can reach out to with questions you may have, and who can help you find resources that you, a family member or a friend may need when dealing with substance use.

- [Never Use Alone](#)
- [SAMHSA Hotline](#)
- [Lines for Life](#)
- [Fentanyl Toolkit for Schools](#)