

# Wounds From Fentanyl With Xylazine

## What is xylazine?

Xylazine (“tranq”) is an animal tranquilizer that is becoming common in the illicit drug supply across the country. It is being mixed with other street drugs, especially fentanyl. Like fentanyl, xylazine can cause sedation, loss of consciousness, reduced breathing, and dependence. Although naloxone does not work on xylazine, naloxone should always be given for suspected overdose—it will help if there is fentanyl or any other opioid involved. If you think someone has overdosed, give naloxone and call 911. If they are not breathing, begin rescue breathing until emergency responders arrive.

Drugs containing xylazine can cause wounds that can grow quickly and be difficult to treat.



Wounds caused by drugs containing xylazine.

## Xylazine wounds

- May appear if you inject, smoke or snort fentanyl with xylazine added.
- Can start anywhere on your body, especially on arms, legs, hands, or feet. Check these areas frequently for signs of new wounds.
- Wounds can “tunnel” or spread to nearby tissues. They can form thick scabs as they try to heal.
- Are harder to care for than other types of wounds.

## How to care for wounds

- Clean wounds with soap and water at least every 2-3 days.
- Put ointment on gauze and place on entire wound. Cover with more dry gauze.
- Wrap with clean dry gauze and secure with tape. Make sure wrap is not too tight.
- Cover dressing with an ACE bandage, coban, or long sleeves/pants.
- Change dressing every 1-3 days. Watch for signs to seek medical care.

## When to seek medical care

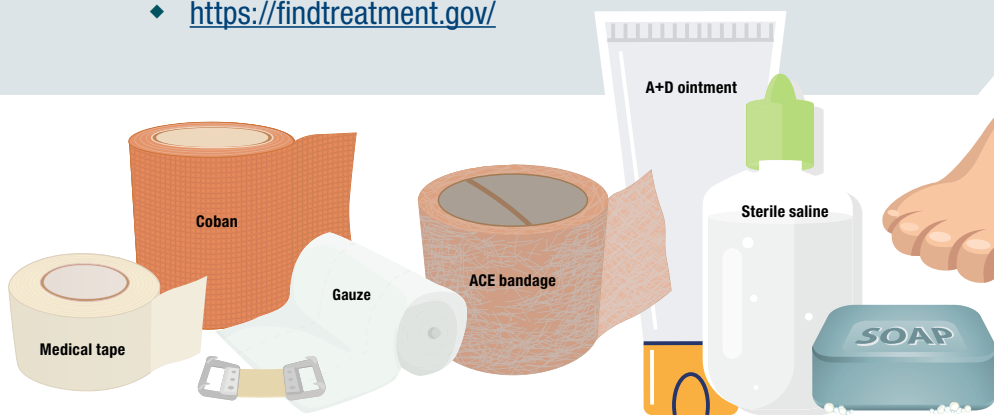
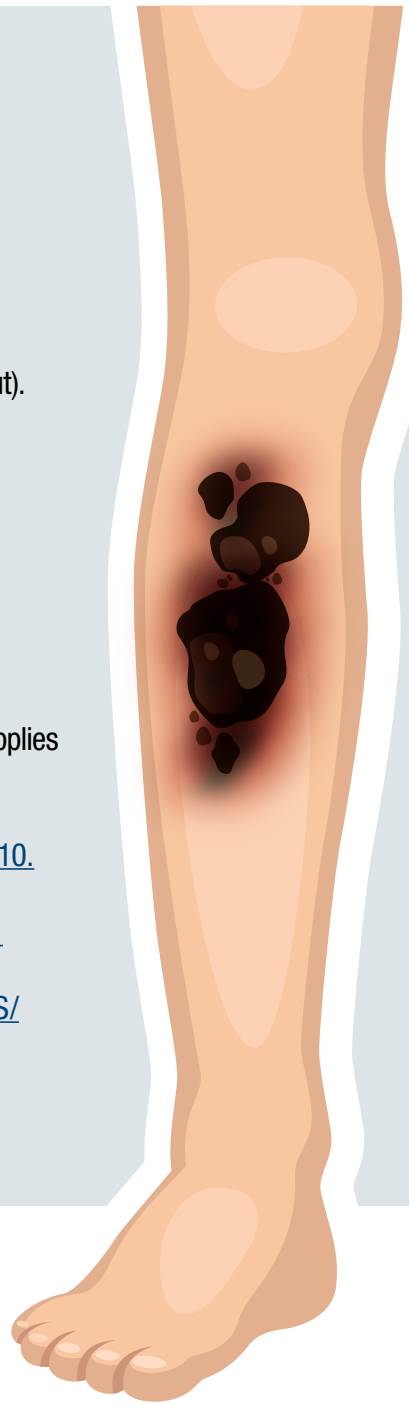
- Wound starts to look unusual (dark, black, red, hot, hard to the touch, thick, smelly, yellow/green discharge).
- If you have signs of infection:
  - » Fever
  - » Warm, red, painful or swollen skin near the wound



- » Blood or pus coming from the wound
- » A foul odor coming from the wound
- » Pain or decreased ability to move the arm or leg
- » Pieces of tissue falling off
- » Exposed bone or tendon
- » New numbness

### More tips

- Keep wounds clean, moist and covered.
- Avoid using alcohol/hydrogen peroxide on wounds (these dry them out).
- Avoid scratching wounds.
- If injecting, practice harm reduction strategies below:
  - » Start low and go slow
  - » Rotate injection sites
  - » Try not to inject in or around wounds
  - » Use new supplies every time and avoid sharing used supplies
- For harm reduction supplies or to connect to a peer outreach specialist, contact:
  - » Contact Health Resources in Action to access harm reduction supplies or to connect to a peer outreach specialist: 1-833-975-0505
  - » Use the links below to locate a service provider:
    - ◆ <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/AMH/Pages/Measure110.aspx>
    - ◆ [Measure 110 BHRNS: Find Free Treatment and Recovery Services Near You](https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/SUBSTANCEUSE/Pages/Harm-Reduction.aspx)
    - ◆ <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/SUBSTANCEUSE/Pages/Harm-Reduction.aspx>
    - ◆ <https://www.treatmentaccessline.org/>
    - ◆ <https://findtreatment.gov/>



**Oregon Health Authority**

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION  
 Injury & Violence Prevention Program  
 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIVISION  
 Addiction Treatment Recovery and Prevention unit (ATRP)

200-299810 (01/2024)

Program:  
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/SUBSTANCEUSE/OPIOIDS/Pages/FentanylFacts.aspx>

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact Injury & Violence Prevention Program at [IVPP.General@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:IVPP.General@odhsoha.oregon.gov) or 971-673-1222 (voice/text). We accept all relay calls.