

PREGNANCY AND FENTANYL

Fentanyl is an addictive, powerful synthetic opioid used to treat severe pain and is also increasingly found in the illicit drug market in recent years.^{1,2} Even small amounts of fentanyl can be deadly and illegally made fentanyl (IMF) is linked to most recent cases of fentanyl-related overdose.³ IMF is often added to drugs like heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine, or made into fake prescription pills.^{2,3,4} Many people are not aware that their drugs are laced with fentanyl.³



USE DURING PREGNANCY

While fentanyl-specific information about maternal and fetal outcomes is currently limited, use of other opioids during pregnancy has been linked to low birth weight, preterm birth, and neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS), a group of conditions that can occur when newborns withdraw from certain substances including fentanyl. NAS symptoms can include irritability, poor sleep, extreme drowsiness, poor feeding, seizures, and hyperactive reflexes.^{5,6}

TREATMENT DURING PREGNANCY

Sometimes when people find out they are pregnant, they think about changing how they use substances. During pregnancy, medications such as methadone or buprenorphine along with counseling and recovery support services can help treat opioid use disorder.⁹⁻¹¹ It's important for pregnant people to talk with their healthcare providers before quickly stopping opioids as it can cause serious problems, including preterm labor, fetal distress, and miscarriage.^{10,12,13}

To get help for a substance use disorder, talk to a healthcare provider or call [SAMHSA's National Helpline](https://www.samhsa.gov) at 1-800-662-4357.

OVERDOSE DURING PREGNANCY

Naloxone is a life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose from opioids—including fentanyl. Naloxone is safe to use during pregnancy.⁷ The Food and Drug Administration recommends that naloxone should not be withheld if a pregnant person is suspected to be experiencing an overdose.⁸ Naloxone should be administered right away even if you're unsure if someone is overdosing on opioids.

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