



Integrity Sampling

DRUG & ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Welcome to our latest newsletter. We aim to update our valued partners and the workplace (generally) about issues that face our industry; drugs and alcohol in the workplace. We highlight the latest trends, what concerns are filtering through to the shop floor, and help to educate those who strive for a safer and harm free workplace.

Integrity Sampling P/L is Australia wide, with 130 staff and technicians. We are Australia's leading drug and alcohol testing company. We service the transport, warehousing, manufacturing, building, construction, logistics, aviation, marine, mining, forestry, automotive and allied industries, performing in excess of 50,000 tests annually.

NEWSLETTER

Fentanyl misuse widespread

It's possibly not a drug you've even heard of, but its use is becoming more widespread. Its name? Fentanyl.

What is fentanyl?

According to the Australian Drug Foundation, fentanyl is a depressant, which means it slows the messages travelling between the brain and the body. This means it acts in the same way as an extremely commonly used legal drug, alcohol, and Australia's most commonly used illegal drug, cannabis. Heroin is also a depressant. And like heroin, fentanyl belongs to a group of drugs known as opioids, which are derived from the opium poppy.

But unlike heroin, fentanyl is not illegal. Well, at least it's not illegal if you've been prescribed the drug. The strong painkiller is prescribed by doctors for severe pain, such as a back injury, cancer, nerve damage and severe trauma. It's what's called a schedule 8 drug, a group of drugs that are considered addictive and has the potential for abuse. Only doctors with a schedule 8 permit can prescribe fentanyl.

Unfortunately, like many prescription drugs, that doesn't mean people aren't getting hold of fentanyl when they haven't been prescribed it. This is a big concern because there have been a number of deaths caused by fentanyl. For example, it's been linked to the death of 13 drug users in Sydney and was the drug found in the system of music star Prince.

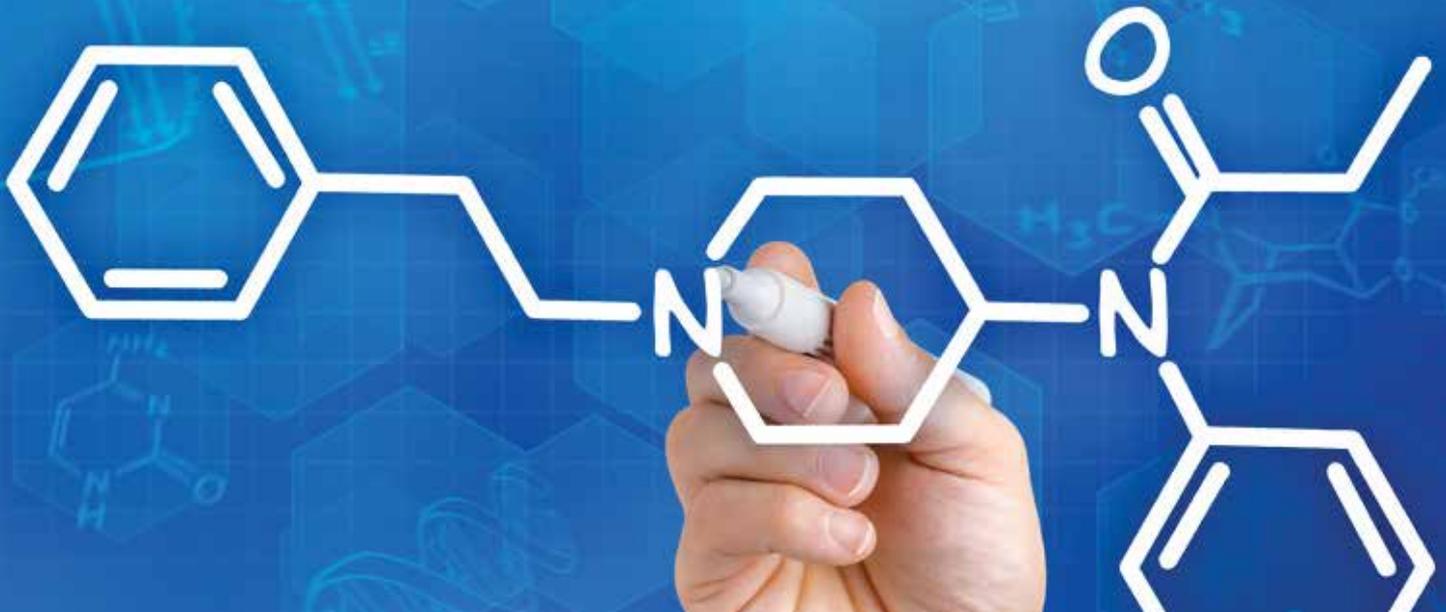
Like many drugs, legal and illegal, the effects of fentanyl will differ from individual to individual. And it will also depend on how much fentanyl is taken and the strength of the drug. But in less severe cases effects can include nausea and vomiting, drowsiness, confusion, fatigue, dizziness, slurred speech and impaired balance. In more severe cases, the effects can include chest pain, slowed breathing, seizure, unconsciousness, coma and death.

And, like many other drugs, its not just when the drugs are in the person's system that there are effects, as the 'hangover effect' can also cause issues for most people. Withdrawal is also a challenge. If you're a regular user of fentanyl and then go without for a period, you can expect about a week of withdrawal side effects.

Clearly, when you look at the side effects of fentanyl, the hangover effects and the withdrawal effects, this is not a drug we want in the hands of people who haven't been prescribed it.

Source: Australian Drug Foundation

FENTANYL



IN OTHER NEWS...

Is it possible to beat an alcohol test?

If you've ever fronted up for work the morning after a big night of drinking, or needed to drive the car to get to work or take the kids to school, have you ever wondered whether you could still be over the limit?

There are many reputed ways to beat an alcohol test and in recent Integrity Sampling website post we looked at some of the common ones and whether they had any merit. These included mouthwashes, gums, mints and sprays, taking a cold shower, drinking lots of coffee and putting a coin under your tongue. We also examined whether you're better off refusing to take an alcohol test if you think you're over the limit or buying a breathalyser to check your alcohol level.



For the full article and to find out if you can beat an alcohol test, see <http://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2017/01/can-you-beat-alcohol-test/>

Codeine medication will require prescription

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has announced that codeine medication will require a prescription in the future. However, the change does not come into place until 1 February 2018, a little less than a year from now.

In making the decision the TGA looked at compelling evidence of the harm caused by overuse and abuse of over the counter codeine containing medicines, as well as taking into consideration that there is little evidence that low-dose codeine medicines are any more effective for pain relief, coughs, colds and flus than similar medicines without codeine.

It's good news for workplaces that conduct drug testing, because codeine can be picked up during testing (it's an opiate drug, the same as heroin). Integrity Sampling regularly sees the results of people who inadvertently or deliberately misuse codeine, particularly in the winter flu and cold season. Once the change comes into affect early next year, people who test positive for an opiate due to codeine medication will be able to more easily explain the result. And, of course, if required they'll be able to provide evidence that they have been prescribed codeine medication.

Go to <http://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2017/01/codeine-workplace-drug-testing/> for more details.

You've passed a drug or alcohol test, but are you OK to work?

If you pass a drug test – during roadside drug testing or workplace drug testing – can you still be unsafe to drive or work? Similarly, can you pass an alcohol test but not be in a safe condition to drive or work?

While most people would probably say yes, in some cases the answer is no. And that's because of a term that most of us are familiar with - the hangover. That time after drinking alcohol or taking drugs when we may be tired, irritable, have difficulties concentrating, suffer from headaches, blurred vision, dizziness, thirst and nausea. Sound familiar? Yes, most of us have experienced these symptoms after a big night out.

Go to <http://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2016/12/if-you-pass-a-drug-test-can-you-still-be-unsafe/> to find out more about hangovers and why they can leave you vulnerable.



Get the facts on ecstasy

With a common name of the 'party drug', you could be forgiven for thinking that ecstasy is a little pill of happiness and perfectly safe. But this couldn't be further from the truth.

Ecstasy is a synthetic, not like heroin, cannabis and cocaine, which are derived from plants. And most ecstasy pills aren't made in a clean laboratory, by a person who understands chemistry and cares about the process. Most pills come from a basement, suburban industrial park, caravan or kitchen and have been made by a person who flunked chemistry at school and couldn't care less about the health and safety of users. Their only concern is making money. Which is why most ecstasy pills contain very little of the active ingredient MDMA and instead contain amphetamines, LSD, methamphetamines, chalk, cocaine, heroin, rat poison and other questionable substances.

See <http://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2016/12/get-the-facts-on-drugs-ecstasy/> for full details.

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