

# FENTANYL FAST FACTS

## What you should know

**Fentanyl Derivatives:** e.g., acetyl fentanyl, butyryl fentanyl, carfentanil, furanyl fentanyl, 4-methoxybutyrylfentanyl, 4-fluorobutyrylfentanyl, ocfentanil

**Fentanyl Use & Effects:** similar to other opioid analgesics (e.g., morphine); elicits effects incl. pain relief, sedation, euphoria, respiratory depression, etc.

Fentanyl is available in many derivatives of varying strengths. **Pharmaceutical fentanyl** is 50x stronger than heroin & 100x stronger than morphine (*MMWR, 2020*). It is commonly used to treat severe pain & for end-of-life care.

**Non-pharmaceutical (illicit) fentanyl** is commonly mixed with heroin or cocaine.



## Illicit Fentanyl Usage

Fentanyl can be used unintentionally (when it is an unknown contaminant) or intentionally, bought as a cheaper alternative to other opioids. Most patients don't have intention to overdose or be harmed, though strong fentanyl is often attractive & may be used intentionally.

## Toxicology Screening & Confirmation Testing for Fentanyl

Fentanyl **must be tested separately** from other opioids (it will not show up positive on an "opioid" drug screen).

**Fentanyl-specific point of care (POC) screening tests** are now available. Typically POC tests are sold separately from other drug tests—check carefully to see if the toxicology or drug testing that you send includes fentanyl.

Sending out **confirmation-level testing (GC/MS or LC/MS)** can test for fentanyl & its metabolites (norfentanyl). Some specialized toxicology testing must be sent out to check for special analogues of fentanyl.

Due to the fat storage of fentanyl, small amounts of fentanyl & norfentanyl can be seen in **confirmation-level quantitative testing** long after use has discontinued (*UNODC, 2017*).

## Fentanyl Contamination

Often found as a contaminant in substances:

- Cannabis
- Pressed pills sold as opioids (Percocet®)
- Pressed pills sold as sedatives (Xanax®; Klonopin®)
- Cocaine
- Methamphetamine ("meth"—fentanyl is often intentionally mixed with meth as a combination drug)

## Delayed Release/Adipose Storage of Fentanyl & Difficulty Initiating Partial Agonist Treatments

Patients who chronically use fentanyl often experience **delayed release** of the substance over time. This can cause small amounts to be released over days & even weeks or months.

This makes it more challenging for patients to initiate **buprenorphine treatment**, a partial agonist that requires withdrawal from opioids prior to initiation.

Micro-induction or extremely slow initiation of partial agonist treatment medication is often needed to avoid precipitated withdrawal (see *ATTACHMENT A* for protocol).



## Harm Reduction Resources

Fentanyl Test Strips (FTS) are less helpful when fentanyl is intentionally used; however, are extremely useful for patients to test other substances for safety prior to use.

**Southern NJ MAT Center of Excellence:** FTS Visual Guide (see *ATTACHMENT B*)

**National Harm Reduction Coalition:** Fentanyl Use & Overdose Prevention Tips [harmreduction.org/issues/fentanyl/fentanyl-use-overdose-prevention-tips](https://harmreduction.org/issues/fentanyl/fentanyl-use-overdose-prevention-tips)

**North America Syringe Exchange Network:** National Harm Reduction Programs [nasen.org/map](https://nasen.org/map)



Recommended Citation

Fortunato P, Baston K. E. Fentanyl Fast Facts Guide for Prescribers. *Southern NJ MAT Center of Excellence*. 2022.

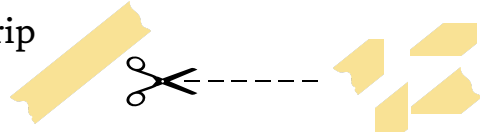
# BUPRENORPHINE (BUP) MICRO-INDUCTION

## HOME INSTRUCTIONS

START with 1 total 2mg bup strip

CUT into 4 pieces

For DAYS 1 AND 2



### IMPORTANT

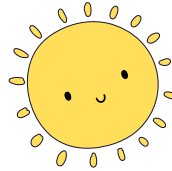
*If you develop worsening symptoms at any time while taking buprenorphine at home, go to the Emergency Room.*

**DAY 1**

Take 1/4 strip in the morning.

**DAY 2**

Take 1/4 strip 2x a day.

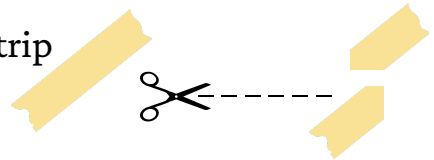


### NEXT

START with 1 total 2mg bup strip

CUT into 2 pieces

For DAY 3



**DAY 3**

Take 1/2 strip 2x a day.

### NEXT

You will use 17 full strips across DAYS 4, 5, 6, AND 7

**DAY 4**

Take 1 strip 2x a day.

Start decreasing your drug use.

**DAY 5**

Take 1 strip 3x a day.

Continue to decrease your drug use.

**DAY 6**

Take 1 strip 4x a day.

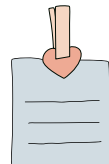
Continue to decrease your drug use.

**DAY 7**

Take 2 strips 4x a day. Stop your drug use.

You should not have any withdrawal.

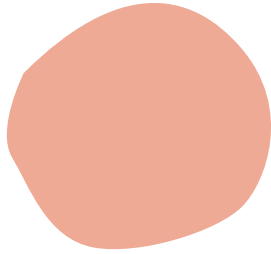
### SEE ATTACHMENT



"Extra Medications to Make You Feel Better"  
to help with side effects

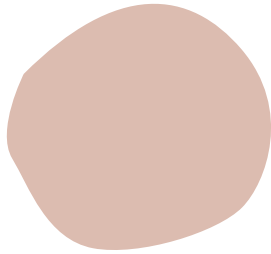
# BUPRENORPHINE (BUP) MICRO-INDUCTION

## *Extra Medications to Make You Feel Better*



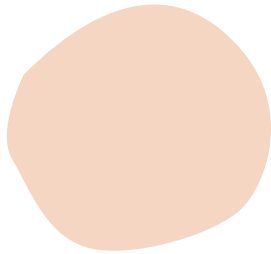
### FOR NAUSEA AND/OR VOMITING

- Take ZOFRAN® 4mg every 6–8hrs



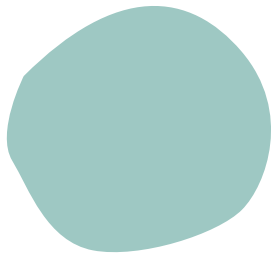
### FOR DIARRHEA

- Take IMODIUM® 2mg every 2hrs; *up to 16mg in 24hrs*



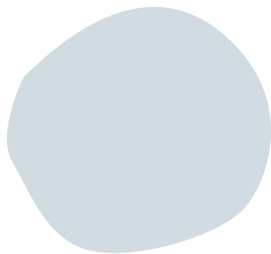
### FOR BODY ACHES

- Take IBUPROFEN 600mg every 6–8hrs
- Take ACETAMINOPHEN 500mg 3x a day as needed



### FOR ANXIETY

- Take HYDROXYZINE 25–50mg every 8hrs
- Take GABAPENTIN 300mg 3x a day
- Take TIZANIDINE 2mg 3x a day,  
**OR** CLONIDINE 0.1mg 2x a day



### FOR SLEEP

- Take HYDROXYZINE as above,  
**OR** TRAZODONE 50mg at night

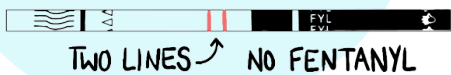
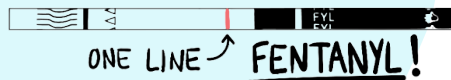
**Talk to your doctor or prescriber about which of these medications are safe for you.**

#### Recommended Citation

Haroz R, Milburn C, Fortunato P, Baston K. E. Buprenorphine Micro-Induction Algorithm for Patients. *Center for Healing, Southern NJ MAT Center of Excellence*. 2022.

DIGNITY AND RESPECT  
LOVE ONE ANOTHER  
STAY SAFE

<3



# HARM REDUCTION RESOURCES

Ask your provider about NALOXONE, a lifesaving medication that reverses opioid overdose. If you cannot access it, request it via [nextdistro.org/newjersey](https://nextdistro.org/newjersey)

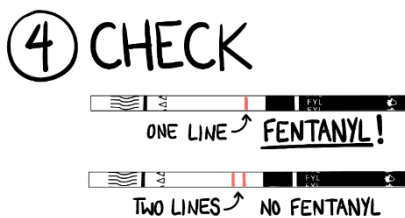
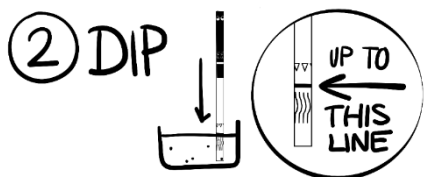
CAMDEN SYRINGE ACCESS PROGRAM MOBILE VAN

2600 Mount Ephraim Avenue, Camden, NJ 08104

HOURS: Mondays and Thursdays from 8:30am–11:30am

FREE: sterile syringes, fentanyl test strips, condoms

## FENTANYL TEST STRIPS VISUAL GUIDE



FOR MORE RESOURCES, VISIT [SNJMATCOE.ORG](https://SNJMATCOE.ORG)

## COVID-19 TESTING AND VACCINES

CAMDEN COUNTY COMPLEX

2600 Mount Ephraim Avenue, Camden, NJ 08104

TESTING WALK-IN HOURS:

MWF from 8am–11am

COOPER UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

416 South 5th Street, Camden, NJ 08103

TESTING BY APPOINTMENT: MTWRF from 9:15am–4pm;

Saturdays and Sundays from 8am–12noon

[CLICK HERE TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT](#)

FOR VACCINE LOCATIONS, VISIT [COVID19.NJ.GOV/FINDER](https://COVID19.NJ.GOV/FINDER)



LET'S GET BACK  
TO THE MOMENTS WE LOVE  
WITH THE PEOPLE WE LOVE

LET'S GET VACCINATED