



# COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

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# PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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April 11, 2016

## **DRUG OVERDOSE HEALTH ALERT**

### *Fentanyl-Contaminated Street Norco*

Drug overdoses and deaths believed to be associated with consumption of an illicitly obtained opioid drug have been reported in several jurisdictions in California over the past two weeks. Health officials suspect that the overdoses and deaths are linked to a drug that strongly resembles the prescription opioid drug Norco, but actually contained an undetermined amount of fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opiate analgesic more potent than morphine. No suspect or confirmed cases have been reported to date in Imperial County.

While there is currently no established way to track fentanyl-related overdoses in California, there is interest at both the state and federal levels to collect information about suspected and confirmed cases. The California Department of Public Health requests that all health-care facilities do the following:

- Voluntarily report suspected and confirmed drug overdose or poisoning cases to the local Public Health Department by calling (442) 265-1464 or via email at [phepireport@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:phepireport@co.imperial.ca.us). The information will be used solely for public health surveillance purposes. The reports should include name, date of birth, age, and address of residence.
- Test for fentanyl when ordering drug screening on cases of suspected drug overdose
- Be aware that Naxolene is effective in reversing the effects of fentanyl. Health officials note that it may take repeated doses of Naxolene over several hours to adequately treat a fentanyl overdose.
- Warn patients with a history of substance abuse about the risks of purchasing street drugs at this time. Fentanyl is colorless and odorless, and cannot be readily detected with laboratory analysis.

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