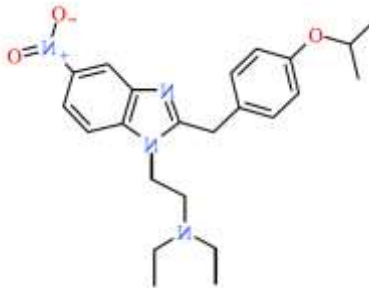




ADDICTION SCIENCE SERIES

ISOTONITAZENE



Isotonitazene (“iso”/ N,N-diethyl-2-[[4-(1-methylethoxy)phenyl]methyl]-5-nitro-1H-benzimidazole-1-ethanamine) is a potent synthetic opioid that has recently emerged as a new psychoactive substance (NPS). As an opioid, it is somewhat more potent than fentanyl, which itself has been responsible for numerous deaths across the United States. Isotonitazene often appears as an off-white or white powder and is sometimes pressed into counterfeit opioid pills that may have a M or an 8 stamped one side and to look like Oxycodone or 8mg Dilaudid (hydromorphone) tablet.

Isotonitazene was first synthesized in the 1950s but was never brought to market as a pharmaceutical substance. It is currently a Schedule I drug, placing it in the same category as heroin, LSD and marijuana. Isotonitazene emerged as an NPS in 2019 and since that time has been linked to numerous deaths across the U.S. In August 2020, the DuPage County (Illinois) coroner announced that Isotonitazene had been involved in 11 deaths. Like other opioids, it can produce sedation, a sense of euphoria and relief from pain. It also slows the breathing rate and deaths associated with this drug have usually involved respiratory arrest.