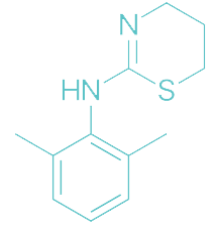


Xylazine Fact Sheet

Xylazine (AKA 'Tranq') is an animal tranquilizer that's becoming a common cut in street drugs across the entire country & usually found mixed with fentanyl. It's not an opioid. In combination with opioids or other drugs, xylazine **causes heavy sedation** and some people have reported suddenly losing consciousness and/or blacking out for 4-6 hours at a time. Nobody knows exactly what xylazine does in humans. Since it's entered the growing unsafe drug supply, new information continues to be found but it changes quickly. Many health professionals can't catch up; some may not know what xylazine is or how to support someone who has a xylazine-related wound. In rural areas especially, it might be more common that a doctor or another health provider doesn't know what xylazine is or how to help you. If you seek medical attention, it's important that whoever is treating you knows that xylazine may be involved so that they can know how to help.



Staying informed can help you be prepared to respond to a xylazine-related emergency.

Rescue Breathing and Overdose Response

A xylazine overdose can look similar to an overdose from other sedating drugs (opioids, benzos, alcohol)

- **In the event of a suspected overdose, administer 1 dose of naloxone and focus on rescue breathing.** If the person doesn't start breathing in 3-5 minutes, administer a 2nd dose. Continue rescue breathing until the person is breathing again.
 - **To avoid the risk of choking on vomit**, place the unconscious person in the rescue or recovery position.
 - For a xylazine overdose, rescue breaths are heavily recommended; it only takes 5 minutes of no oxygen for brain damage.
 - Try to use a CPR face shield if possible.



If someone is breathing, do not administer more naloxone. They're likely probably sedated; keep an eye on them until they regain consciousness in case their breathing slows stops. Make sure that they're in a safe place, because they can be robbed or assaulted in their state. Most of the time, **xylazine is mixed into fentanyl or other opioids**, so using naloxone can

reverse any opioid effect in an overdose.

Multiple and high doses of naloxone are not needed - rescue breathing is essential when responding to a suspected xylazine overdose.

Did you know?

Chest compressions aren't recommended; only do chest compressions if they don't have a pulse and you are trained in giving chest compressions.

Withdrawal and Aftereffects from Xylazine Use

Xylazine withdrawal can cause a hypertensive crisis

(very high blood pressure) with symptoms of a hypertensive emergency include confusion, chest pain, and shortness of breath. Headaches and anxiety are common.

- The "go to" for xylazine withdrawal in hospitals right now is clonidine. This is why the best way to manage a xylazine withdrawal is to be admitted and monitored at a hospital. This isn't always possible though and is only needed in extreme cases.
- Xylazine has its own withdrawal symptoms but the effects are difficult to single out because it is almost always found and used with other drugs.

Reported symptoms include: vomiting, heart palpitations, chills, low energy or fatigue, irritability, anxiety, restlessness, & dysphoria (a general unwell feeling). Can last 1-4 weeks.

For some, xylazine withdrawal can intensify withdrawal from other drugs or it can feel like an opioid or benzo withdrawal (but without seizures).

Wound Care for Xylazine-related wounds

Wounds from xylazine develop differently than those caused by other drugs. Nobody knows why wounds from xylazine appear away from injection sites or

Did you know?

Xylazine is NOT an opioid. Naloxone will not reverse the effects of other drugs contributing to an overdose such as alcohol, benzodiazepines, and xylazine. The most common effects from xylazine are excessive drowsiness or fatigue, and unexplained wounds on your legs or rest of the body (especially in an area you did not inject).

why fewer people have reported serious wounds after smoking or boofing (booty bumping).

How to Identify a Xylazine Wound

- There isn't a definite way to identify a xylazine wound yet but people who use xylazine are reporting reporting wounds, skin ulcers, or abscesses appearing away from injection sites
- If xylazine wounds get infected people have reported that it smells, won't heal, becomes painful, starts draining yellow liquid, or becomes red, swollen, or necrotic (black).
- In rare cases, without treatment, and left to progress over weeks or months, a xylazine wound can go all the way down to the bone and lead to serious issues like amputation.

3 most important things to do (even more important than cleaning) to treat xylazine wounds once they are red and swollen or it's an ulcer-type wound:

1. **Moisture** - keep the wound and the skin around it moist (but not wet). Wet the ulcer-type wound with xeroform or vaseline (or petroleum jelly). A&D ointment also works.
2. **Temperature** - Keep the wound at body temperature, not too hot or cold. This helps healing.
3. **Covered** - This keeps bacteria away. Keep the wound covered (only cover exposed skin) with xeroform gauze or linen with vaseline. Other types of nonadherent gauze (like Aquacel or Adaptic) or linen fabric covered in vaseline can also be used to cover the wound. 5x9 inch sheets are a good size for dressing. Change dressing daily. When wrapping the wound,



Tip

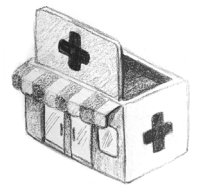
Using another route of administration (not injecting), may reduce xylazine wound risks. If you do inject, apply the same injection practices as you would with any other drug; keep the skin clean, rotate sites, and avoid injecting into wounds (even if the vein is easier to find).

Other things to know about xylazine and wound care:

- **Please do not inject into the wound even if it is easier than finding a vein;**

consider other routes of administration, otherwise the wounds will not heal.

- **Cleaning wounds** - The best practice for cleaning wounds is using soap and running water, but any clean water works
- **Preventing large wounds** - If you take care of wounds early, xylazine wounds can be prevented and treated before they worsen.
- **For skin around the wound** - A&D ointment or petroleum jelly can be used. Skin around the wound shouldn't be too moist or too dry.
- **If the wound is forming a callus, crud, getting dry slough, or looks black or necrotic** - GENTLE scrubbing with soap, water, and a clean washcloth can help GENTLY detach the scabbing and let the body heal the wound. Don't use harsh liquids like alcohol or hydrogen peroxide.
- **If the wound is leaking or draining while covered** - use ABD (abdominal) gauze dressing over the wound covering and skin outside/around the wound.
- If nothing works and the wound keeps getting worse, bigger, or causing a fever, **consider medical attention.** At this point, without care these wounds are more likely to spread and worsen quickly, stretch down to the bone and tendons, and require ongoing care that lasts several months to years. Some people have to have skin grafts, or even amputations of hands, feet, or arms/legs because of presumed xylazine wounds.



THE GROWING UNSAFE DRUG SUPPLY IS A DIRECT RESULT OF DRUG PROHIBITION AND THE LAWS THAT CRIMINALIZES PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS.

Want to learn more about xylazine in the drug supply? Check out

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