

FACTSHEET



www.sdf.org.uk

XYLAZINE

WHAT WORKERS NEED TO KNOW

www.stophedeaths.com

www.scottishdrugservices.com

WHAT IS XYLAZINE?

XYLAZINE IS USED IN
VETERINARY MEDICINE
AND IS **NOT** INTENDED
FOR USE IN HUMANS.

XYLAZINE IS A **SEDATIVE**
USED BY VETS AS A
MUSCLE RELAXANT AND
FOR PAIN RELIEF.

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IS XYLAZINE AN OPIOID LIKE HEROIN?

No, xylazine is not an opioid but is a central nervous system depressant which can slow down breathing and heart rate.

Xylazine has been found mixed in the heroin supply in Scotland, which may increase its harmful effects. Increased reporting of people experiencing sudden collapse or “black outs” has been linked by some to changes in this supply.

WILL NALOXONE BE EFFECTIVE IN REVERSING A XYLAZINE OVERDOSE?

Naloxone should be given in any situation where a person is unresponsive, and an overdose is suspected

Although not an opiate drug itself, xylazine is frequently reported to be mixed with opiate drugs like heroin and so naloxone will be effective in these cases.

One dose should be administered every 2-3 minutes until an ambulance or paramedics arrive or the person is breathing normally.

DOES XYLAZINE CAUSE WOUNDS?

In Scotland, there has been a rise in the number of wounds related to injecting drugs, particularly cocaine. These often involve invasive wounds, abscesses and ulceration which seem to have become much more common.

People injecting drugs and people who work with them should know what to do to prevent, identify and deal promptly with infections associated with injecting.

Experience in the USA and Canada is that there is no definite way to identify a wound caused by xylazine. The way wounds progress and develop varies but generally the wounds being reported have changed.

However, advice on ways to prevent and respond effectively to wounds and infections remains the same.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A WOUND?

- Seek advice from your treatment provider, local harm reduction service or by visiting your GP
- Monitor any wounds closely. Keep track of all changes
- Monitor any other changes to your body – even if they appear to be far from an injection or entry site
- Do not inject any drug into wounds or the area around a wound
- Try not to scratch the wounds and do not pop any blisters
- Keep cuts/wounds covered and clean with water. Avoid using alcohol wipes on the area as these can cause pain, dry the wounds too much and affect the healing process

SEEK EMERGENCY MEDICAL ADVICE IF THE WOUND:

- Becomes wetter than before
- Has more yellow, green or black areas than before
- Becomes more painful, becomes hard or soft or becomes numb
- Appears bigger or deeper than before
- Feels hot or smells
- Or if you have any other signs of infection – fever, chills, nausea

IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT ANY CHANGES TO YOUR SKIN OR ANY WOUNDS, PLEASE SEEK ADVICE FROM MEDICAL OR HARM REDUCTION STAFF



For access to injecting equipment in Scotland.



National naloxone FREE click & deliver service

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