



MATTERS[®]
Medication for Addiction Treatment & Electronic Referrals



WELCOME TO THE NETWORK



www.mattersnetwork.org

Barriers to Treatment



Stigma



Limited Access to
Treatment & Prescription



Financial &
Transportation



MATTERS
Medication for Addiction Treatment & Electronic Referrals

What We Do

Our rapid referral platform is used to efficiently link individuals with opioid use disorder to medication assisted treatment (MAT) programs **24/7, 365 days** a year, and supports patient success through various other resources including harm reduction and direct patient follow-up.



Our Funders

MATTERS has been made available at no cost to individuals and organizations, through various partnerships over the years.



MATTERS' Goals



Goal #1

Connect individuals to appropriate treatment in their chosen community within 72 hours of presenting.



Goal #2

Minimize the window of time from when an individual is encountered to when they are cared for.



Goal #3

For those who are not in a medical setting and need medication ASAP, connect to a telemedicine provider for evaluation.



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MATTERS Mission

To provide every person multiple pathways to treatment and resources within their own community by improving access and eliminating barriers.



MATTERS Vision

To be utilized across the United States as a way to reduce morbidity and mortality rates for people by linking them to stigma-free treatment and resources.

Our Partners are Expected to:

- 1 Not place counseling appointments, group sessions, or other requirements prior to a patient being evaluated/continued on MAT
- 2 Offer timely appointments from all referral environments and patients should ideally be seen on the date chosen
- 3 Not automatically disqualify individuals from receiving MAT if they engage in polysubstance use (especially benzodiazepines and/or alcohol)
- 4 Accept referred patients previously discharged from a treatment program
- 5 Accept and provide unbiased care for patients regardless of insurance status and not place undue financial burden on the patient
- 6 Deliver culturally appropriate care



Navigate to our Website to Begin the Process



[TREATMENT](#) [SUPPLIES](#) [EDUCATION](#) [CONTACT](#) [GET HELP](#)

[SUBMIT A REFERRAL](#)



Our new mobile app is live! [Click here to learn more.](#)

Connecting the Dots

Linkage to Treatment, Harm Reduction Supplies, and Telemedicine Services

MATTERS facilitates rapid referrals for individuals with opioid use disorder by connecting participating referral sites, receiving treatment organizations, peer support agencies, and pharmacies all into one efficient process.

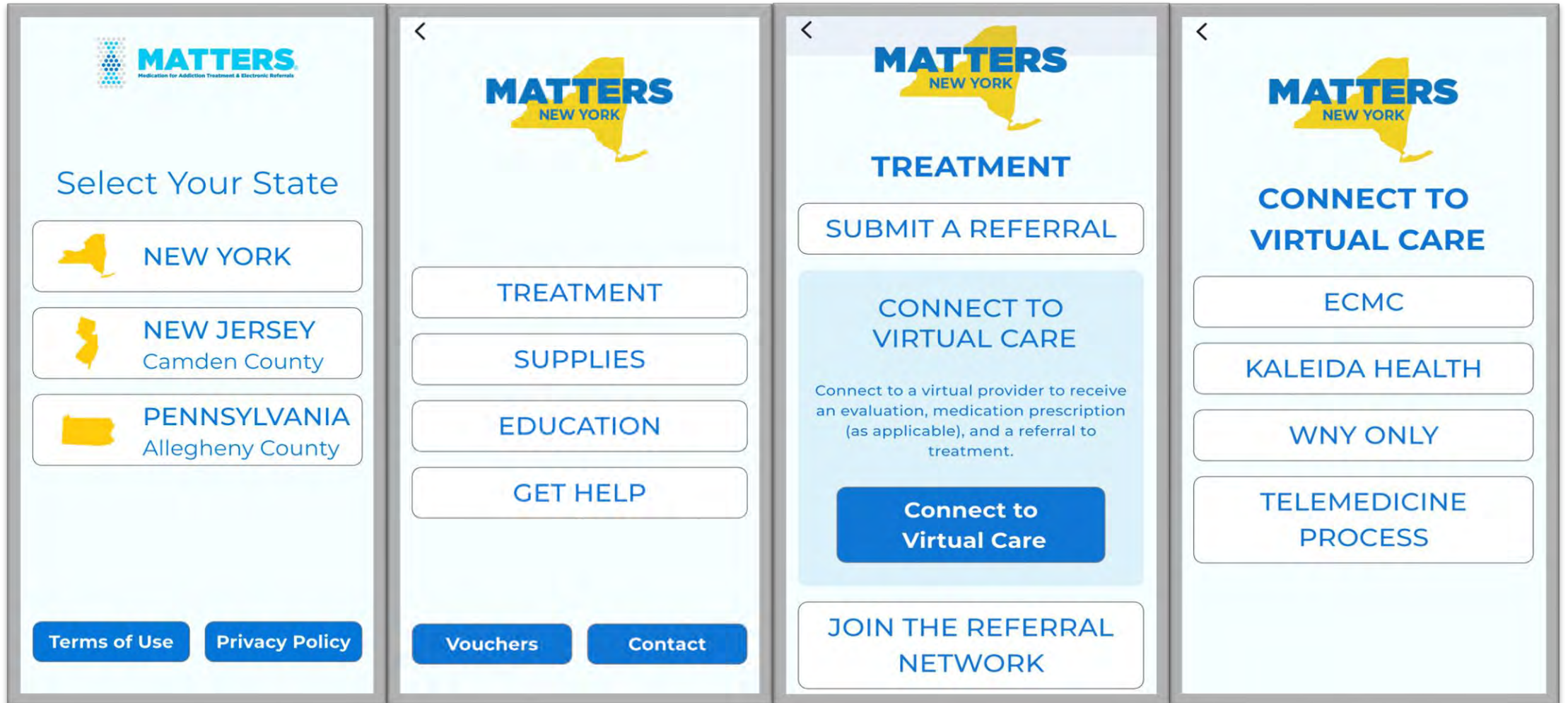
Watch this 45-second clip to learn more about who we are and what we do.

[Find Treatment Near You](#)

[Order Free Supplies](#)



Our New “MATTERS Network” App



How It Works

1

Referral Site

Our referral site partners encounter an individual with opioid use disorder.

2

Rapid Referral

MATTERS facilitates rapid referrals, offering medication vouchers, transportation vouchers, and peer referrals to assist individuals in getting to their first clinic appointment.

3

Treatment Organization

Individuals are connected to an outpatient treatment organization of their choice and are seen in as little as 24 hours from their referral! Gaining access to over 2,500 available appointment slots.





Peer Support

Services that connect individuals with someone who has had success in their recovery from substance use disorder, offering guidance based on their lived experience.



Limited Information

When opting in, only the patient's name and contact information are shared with the peer organization, which will reach out within 24-48 hours.



Medication Vouchers Accepted At:

MATTERS' medication voucher covers the cost of up to 14 days of any combination formulation of buprenorphine/naloxone for the uninsured. If the person indicates that they are uninsured or underinsured, the medication voucher is automatically sent to the referring site and to the individual.

Walgreens

NY, NJ, CT, PA, VT, MA

Wegmans

NY, NJ, PA

DUANEreade™

NY, NJ, CT, PA, VT, MA

 **CVS**
pharmacy®

NY, NJ, CT, PA

List of independent pharmacies available on the voucher print-out or our website

Buprenorphine Assistance Program (Bupe-AP)

- 1** In partnership with NYS-DOH and OASAS, the program covers Bupe/Naloxone prescriptions for up to one year for eligible individuals.
- 2** Support staff guide applicants through a brief intake, including income verification (must be under 500% of FPL).
- 3** Coverage starts immediately upon approval; medications are available at any ADAP-participating pharmacy.



Transportation Voucher Program

UBER Health

On going conversations with regional transportation options

Everyone referred through MATTERS is offered transportation assistance in the form of a free, round-trip ride for their first appointment.

1

Individuals who opt-in automatically receive e-mail and/or text instructions on how to set up their ride.

2

Contact the MATTERS team to set up your round-trip ride.

3



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Telemedicine Evaluations

MATTERS partners with providers to offer virtual evaluations for individuals across New York State



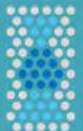
Rapid
Evaluation



Access to
Medication



Referral to
Treatment



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*Telemedicine services are available 11am - 11pm across New York State and 24/7 in Western New York.

Harm Reduction Distribution



Naloxone
(Narcan)



Drug Test Strips
(Fentanyl & Xylazine)



Syringe Services
(Apply on our website)



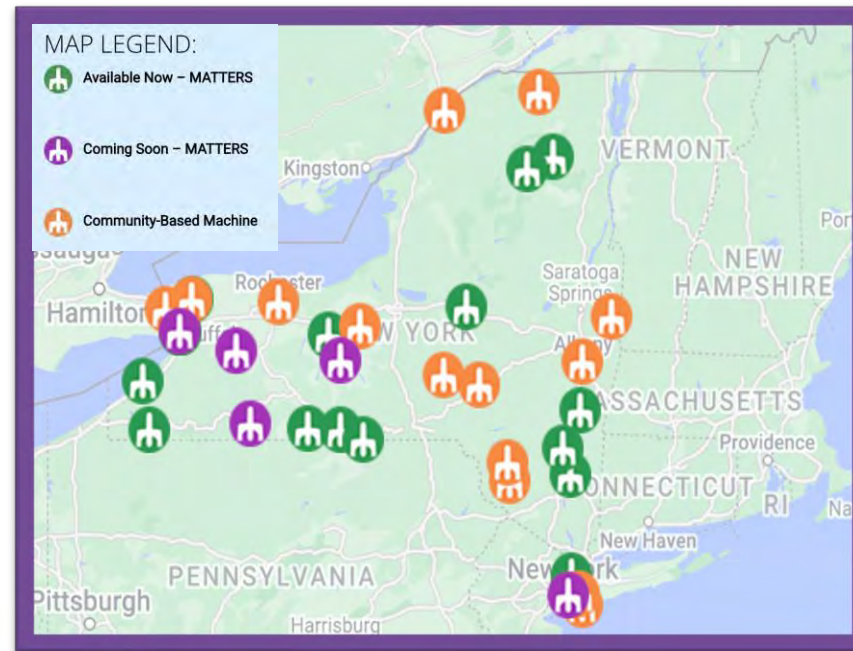
Naloxone Wall Box
(Standard & video box)

Harm Reduction Vending Machine Program

These vending machines are placed in locations that are available to the public 24/7, 365 days a year. All supplies in the vending machine are free.



Vending Machine



Vending Machine Locations



Supplies Inside



Follow-up Services

Identifying obstacles, re-linking individuals, and providing opportunities for community feedback

24-72 hours
after referral

30 days
after referral

60 days
after referral

90 days
after referral



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HOW TO SUBMIT A MATTERS REFERRAL



www.mattersnetwork.org

What Happens Next?

Patient Referral Confirmation



Referral info
emailed/on partner
homepage



Treatment
partner notified



Peer
partner notified



Individual receives
confirmation
of referral



MATTERS
follow-up call

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



MATTERS Network

SUD referrals and resources

Open



Q: How many times can an individual be referred?

A: There is no limit to how many times an individual can be referred.

Q: Does a MATTERS referral automatically issue a Bupe Rx?

A: No. Making a referral simply links the person to an appropriate treatment provider who can evaluate the individual for an Rx.

Q: What if an individual needs medication prior to their appointment?

A: Direct individuals to telemedicine where a provider will evaluate and prescribe a bridge prescription if appropriate.

Q: How soon is an appointment available to individuals?

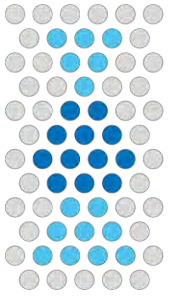
A: Individuals will be able to select an appointment as soon as the next business day (treatment provider dependent).

Q: Why are exact appointment times not offered?

A: This allows for clinic flexibility.

Q: Is there any follow-up with the person once I make a referral?

A: Yes. Our outreach team conducts follow-up calls within 24-72 hours of a patient being referred, and we continue with additional follow-ups at 30, 60, and 90-day intervals. If an individual is re-referred multiple times, we will reach out to help identify and remove any barriers to linkage.



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Harm Reduction and Emerging Substances

 mattersnetwork.org

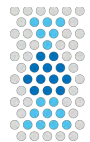
 765-MATTERS (628-8377)





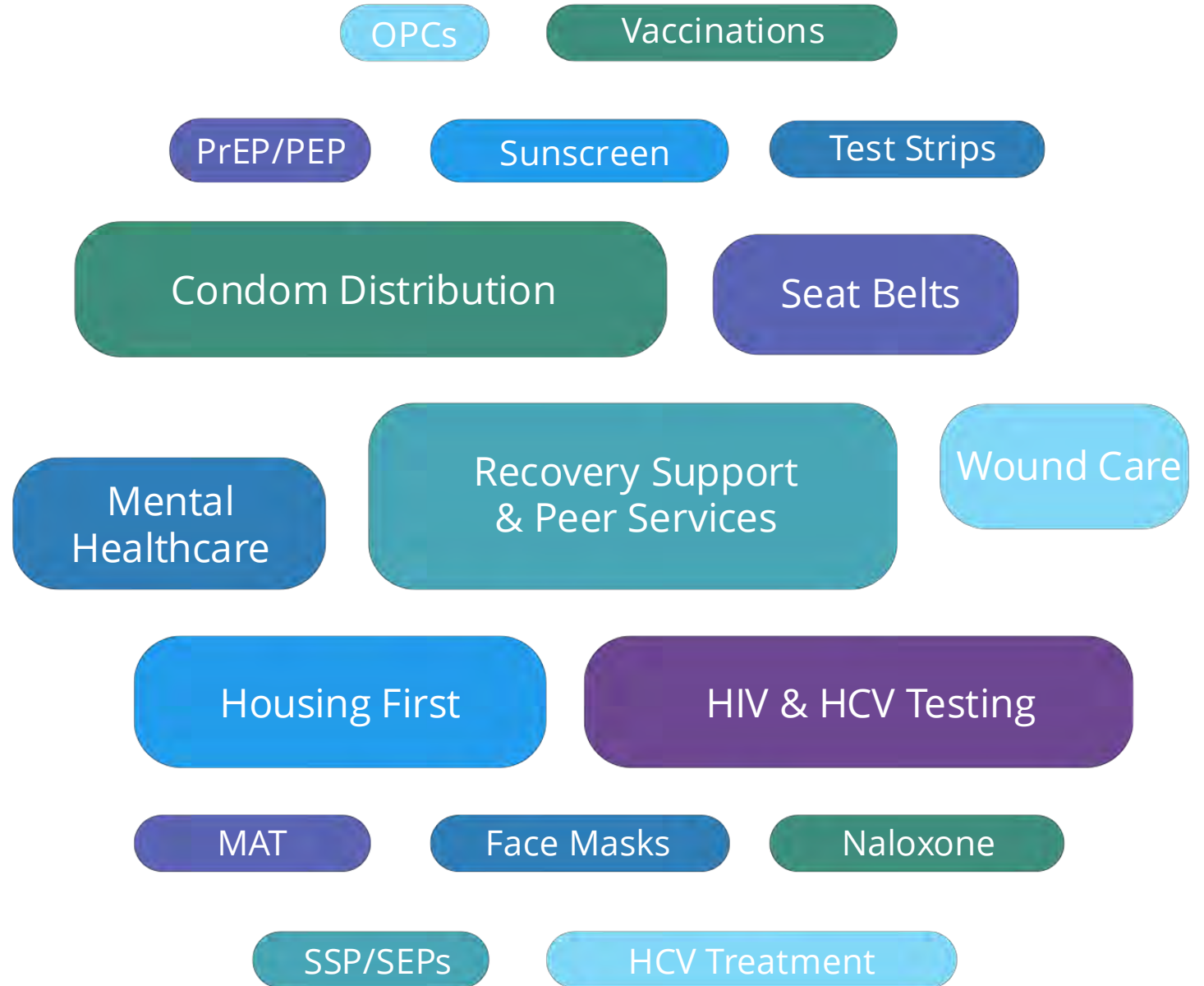
Did You Know?

Only 25% of people who use illicit substances develop substance use disorder (SUD). However, only 10% of people with SUD receive treatment.





Examples of Harm Reduction





Current Harm Reduction Strategies



Fentanyl and xylazine test strips



Naloxone trainings and distribution



Community-based vending machines



Mail-based syringe services



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What Are Opioids?

Natural or synthetic substances that act on the brain, often used to treat chronic or severe pain



Why Are Opioids a Risk?

Opioids are extremely addictive substances. Taking too many at a time can lead to respiratory depression, which can result in death.





Fentanyl: What is it?

Fentanyl is a **potent, synthetic** opioid that is commonly **mixed into heroin and other drugs** (ie. cocaine, methamphetamines).



[Source: DEA](#)



Did You Know?

- ✓ Fentanyl is **30 - 50x more potent than heroin** and **80 - 100x more potent than morphine.**
- ✓ Fentanyl is **illegal when not prescribed** by a healthcare professional



Medical vs. Illicit Fentanyl

Medical Fentanyl

In healthcare settings, there are **multiple safety precautions** in place when administering fentanyl. It has **fewer side effects** than other opioids and it **can be administered intranasally**, which is less invasive.

Illicit Fentanyl

Street fentanyl is often found **in highly concentrated doses** (“chocolate chip cookie effect”) in other substances, leading **to unintentional overdoses**.



88%

Nationwide

Opioid overdose deaths
involved fentanyl in 2021

92%

New York State

Opioid overdose deaths
involved fentanyl in 2021

Fast Facts on Fentanyl

Fentanyl contamination in the drug supply has become so common that **pure heroin is extremely rare**. This combination of heroin and fentanyl is called **“dope”**.



65%

Erie County, NY

Opioid overdose deaths
in 2024 involved cocaine



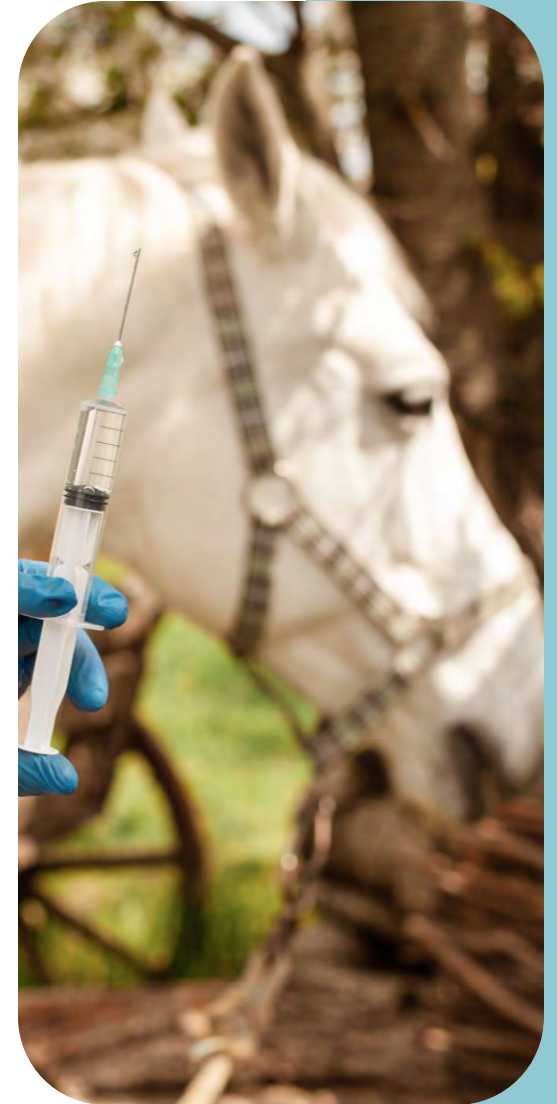
Xylazine: What is it?

Xylazine, a.k.a. 'Tranq', is an FDA-approved veterinary **sedative** that is commonly **mixed with drugs like fentanyl** to lengthen their euphoric effects.



Did You Know?

- ✓ Xylazine is **relatively easy to access** online or in veterinary settings.
- ✓ It **lowers blood pressure and respiration**, resulting in loss of consciousness for hours and an **increased risk of overdose**.





More Information on Xylazine

oid

WARNING!

Graphic images on
the next slide

not an opioid and, therefore, **does not respond** (Narcan). However, xylazine is often mixed with opioids, so using Narcan can still save a life!

associated with **severe skin wounds** that can lead to amputation. These wounds are often on the lower body.

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6/23/22



8/8/22



9/8/22



1/3/23



5/22/23



7/8/23



2/8/24



6/4/24



7/30/24



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600%

Nationwide

Increase in xylazine-positive overdose deaths between 2020-2021

12%

New York State

Opioid overdose deaths involved xylazine (including NYC) in 2021

Fast Facts on Xylazine

Xylazine first emerged in the U.S. in the 2000s and was named an emerging public health threat in April 2023 after being linked to an increase in fatal overdoses.

Number of Xylazine-Positive Overdose Deaths by Region

Region	2020	2021	% Increase
Northeast	631	1,281	103%
South	116	1,423	1,127%
Midwest	57	351	516%
West	4	34	750%

Source: DEA

13+

Erie County, NY

Opioid overdose deaths in 2023 involved xylazine

Medetomidine: Background

α2-adrenoreceptor
agonist

- Produces sedation and pain-relieving effects
- Lasts longer in duration compared to drugs like clonidine and xylazine
- Synthetically manufactured

What is it?

A mixture of dexmedetomidine and levomedetomidine, with dexmedetomidine being the active component.

How is it used?

Dexmedetomidine (Precedex) may be administered to patients in surgical and intensive care settings for sedation, anxiety relief, and pain management. Other forms are typically reserved only for veterinary use.



Medetomidine: Effects



Slows heart rate, initial hypertension followed by prolonged hypotension, and reduced cardiac output

Dry mouth, hypothermia, spontaneous muscle contractions, and respiratory depression



Same drug class as xylazine, but is 200x more potent

Unknown if prolonged exposure can cause skin ulcers as seen with xylazine



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Medetomidine: Treatment

Often mixed with opioids and xylazine, therefore **it is recommended to administer naloxone** in cases of suspected medetomidine-involved overdose.



Respiratory Depression

It is recommended to perform rescue breathing and place individual in recovery position.



Cardiovascular Effects

Cardiovascular support may be necessary in the event of a medetomidine overdose.





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Reach Out For More Information



Website

mattersnetwork.org



Telephone

765-MATTERS (628-8377)



Email

harmreduction@mattersnetwork.org