

Medetomidine



What Is Medetomidine?

Medetomidine, like xylazine, is a non-opioid sedative and anesthetic used in veterinary medicine. However, it is about 200 times more powerful than xylazine.

Neither substance is meant for human use. Medetomidine is being added to fentanyl, as well as other street drugs and counterfeit pills. In some areas, it has replaced xylazine as the most common drug adulterant, but it can also be included with xylazine. Adulterants are substances added to increase bulk, enhance effects or reduce costs.

What Are The Side-Effects?

Sedative effects can last between 2-3 hours but can be prolonged when combined with opioids. Initial effects can include:

- Very low blood pressure
- Slow heart rate
- Extreme sleepiness
- Difficulty breathing
- Hypothermia
- Overdose
- Coma

Naloxone will not have an effect on medetomidine within the body because it is not an opioid. However, **naloxone should still be used** in suspected overdoses due to the likely presence of opioids.

What Are The Symptoms Of Withdrawal From Medetomidine?

Withdrawal from substances containing medetomidine occurs within hours and can be life-threatening. Symptoms of withdrawal can include:

- Very high blood pressure
- Fast heart rate
- Tremors
- Hallucinations
- Vomiting
- Reduced alertness
- Psychosis

Dial 911 for medical assistance in the event of an overdose or symptoms of withdrawal.

What Are Ways People Can Stay Safe?

- **Never Use Alone:** have a trusted individual present who can give naloxone and call 911 in the case of an emergency. **Safe Spot** is a service for people who use drugs and do not have a trusted contact to turn to for help in the event of an overdose. Call Safe Spot at **800-972-0590**.
- **Carry Naloxone:** Naloxone can reverse the effects of any opioids that are mixed with medetomidine. Naloxone is available through **DrugFreeCT.org** as well as **RBHAOs** and over-the-counter at pharmacies.
- **Test Drugs Before Using:** There are test strips to check if medetomidine is present in the drug. Visit **DrugFreeCT.org** for information.
- **Reduce Injection Related Risks:** Use a sterilized needle, change injection sites, allow skin and veins to heal before next use or take the drugs a different way.



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