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**DRUG OVERDOSE HEALTH ALERT:
Fentanyl-Contaminated Street Norco®**

April 19, 2016 – Clarification on Reporting to County Public Health

SITUATION

Overdoses due to illicitly obtained drugs that strongly resemble the prescription drug Norco® have been reported in California, including in Sacramento and Contra Costa County. Instead of acetaminophen and hydrocodone, these counterfeit drugs actually contained an undetermined amount of fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opiate analgesic.

As you may be aware, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued a Drug Overdose Health Alert on April 8, 2016 entitled “Fentanyl-Contaminated Street Norco®”. This alert describes the recent report of 48 overdoses and at least 10 deaths over a 10-day period in Sacramento County that appear to be associated with the consumption of these counterfeit Norco® pills. CDPH is requesting that all health care facilities report suspected and confirmed fentanyl overdoses to local health departments to assess the magnitude and outcomes of this situation in California.

ACTIONS REQUESTED OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:

1. REPORT suspected and confirmed overdose cases to Alameda County Public Health by fax to (510) 268-2111 including:

- a. Emergency Department visits due to opioid overdoses
- b. All deaths due to opioid overdoses

Reports should include: Patient’s Name, Date of Birth, Age, and Address of residence, and the Name and contact information of individual initiating report.

2. TEST for fentanyl when ordering drug screening on cases of suspected overdoses.

3. BE AWARE that repeated doses of Naloxone over several hours may be needed to adequately treat fentanyl overdose.

4. WARN clients and patients against taking prescription-like pills that are not prescribed by a health care provider and not dispensed by a pharmacy. Counterfeit Norco pills containing fentanyl are very difficult to distinguish from actual Norco pills. Fentanyl is estimated to be 80 times more potent than morphine and hundreds of times more potent than heroin.

RESOURCES

- › CDPH Drug Overdose Health Alert: Fentanyl-Contaminated Street Norco:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Documents/drug%20overdose%20health%20alert%204.18.16.pdf>

Please distribute to all providers in your practice.

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.