



LOCAL DRUG SAMPLE TESTING UPDATE

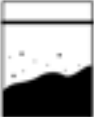
Legend:

(O) Opioids	(B) Benzodiazepines
(S) Stimulants	(C) Cannabinoids
(A) Other	(H) Hallucinogen/Dissociative
Active Cut	

testRI is a two-year study to find out what is in the drug supply in Rhode Island and how changes to the supply are impacting people who use drugs in our community. We are testing used equipment, like pipes and syringes, that are collected from the community or donated by individuals or local organizations. Samples are tested using advanced confirmatory toxicology testing (LC-QTOF-MS).

Data below are from two samples collected in June in Providence.

*Data here only represent a sample of the local drug supply in Rhode Island. Because of that, the samples we have collected and tested may not represent the broader drug supply in the state. Samples are also not being tested in relation to overdose so outcomes from use, like overdose, are unknown.

Sample date & origin	Sold as (name or appearance):	What we found:
June 2023 Providence	 Adderall 30 (orange pill)	* indicated substances that make up most of a sample Methamphetamine (S)*
June 2023 Providence	 Fentanyl (white powder)	Xylazine* (A) Fentanyl* (O) Acetaminophen (A) Acetylfentanyl (O) Caffeine (A)

Why does this matter?

Pressed pills, or pills that are not from your own prescription and pharmacy, may contain unknown substances that could increase risk of harm. In June 2023 we tested a pill sold as "Adderall 30" that contained methamphetamine as the only active substance.

We also tested fentanyl sample that contained both xylazine and fentanyl as main components. Xylazine has been appearing in the Rhode Island drug supply. In all of our testing thus far, xylazine has always been present with fentanyl. Xylazine can complicate overdoses by leading to heavy sedation and can lead to skin and soft tissue damage. Naloxone will reverse the effects of fentanyl, fentanyl analogs and other opioids, but will not reverse xylazine effects. Give naloxone if you suspect an overdose.

The drug supply is unpredictable and continuously changing. The mixing of drugs with or without the knowledge of people who are using drugs creates higher risk for overdose.

What we found:

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is a pain medication frequently added to drugs as an active cut. At standard doses it is safe, but in very high doses it can cause liver injury or failure.

Acetylfentanyl is a fentanyl analog and is considered less potent than fentanyl. Acetylfentanyl can also be a byproduct in fentanyl synthesis. Acetylfentanyl has not been approved for pharmaceutical use and there have been no studies in humans on safety of use. Over the last decade acetylfentanyl has been reported in the drug supply and in fatal overdoses. In overdose, acetylfentanyl can cause sedation and decreased or stopped breathing. Naloxone will work to reverse overdose due to acetylfentanyl.

Caffeine is often added to drugs as active cut for stimulant effects or to enhance delivery.

Fentanyl is a highly potent opioid with high risk for overdose. In overdose it can cause problems with breathing and unresponsiveness.

Methamphetamine is a stimulant. Risks include heart problems (e.g., abnormal heart rhythm or rate, heart attack, heart failure), high blood pressure, hallucinations, psychosis, and kidney and/or muscle injury.

Xylazine is a veterinary sedative. Xylazine is a long-acting and sedating medication, but it is not an opioid. Especially if combined with other sedating medications it can cause unresponsiveness, low blood pressure, a slowed heart rate, and decreased breathing. Xylazine use has been associated with skin ulcers and wounds. Chronic use can also lead to dependence and a withdrawal syndrome that can cause irritability, anxiety, and dysphoria.

How to reduce risk

Because the drug supply is always changing, it can be hard to know what you are buying. Testing your drugs first with fentanyl test strips can be a good first step.

Having naloxone (Narcan) with you is always important so you can respond to an overdose. It is also important to try not to use alone so someone can help you if you experience an overdose.

Start slow and go slow. Using a little bit of your drug at a time can be helpful to test the strength and keep track of your doses.

Try to avoid mixing depressants or downers, like benzos, opioids, and alcohol when you use. Mixing these can increase your risk of an overdose.

