



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Frederick County Health Department

Barbara A. Brookmyer, M.D., M.P.H. ▪ Health Officer

## ***Public Health Alert***

**January 20, 2023**

The Behavioral Health Services Division of the Frederick County Health Department has identified a new substance found in the local drug supply. Some local samples of heroin and fentanyl contain medetomidine.

Medetomidine is a surgical anesthetic only approved for veterinary use. It is in the same class of respiratory suppressant drugs as xylazine. Medetomidine is more potent and selectively bound than xylazine based on studies done in animals. There is little known about its effect on humans. Since it is not an opioid, Narcan does not work on this substance. But since it is a cutting agent often mixed with opioids, **Narcan should still be administered.** Medetomidine has been found in five drug checking samples throughout the state of Maryland in the past 6 months, including samples from Allegheny County, Baltimore City, Frederick County and Wicomico County.

The Frederick County Health Department Behavioral Health Services offers free overdose response training, overdose prevention education, Narcan, and fentanyl test strips. For more information, or if you or a loved one is in need of support, system navigation, harm reduction supplies or treatment resources contact us at 301-600-1777 or email us at [harmreductionservices@frederickcountymd.gov](mailto:harmreductionservices@frederickcountymd.gov).

###

Andrea L. Walker, MA, MPH, CPRP ▪ Director, Frederick County Behavioral Health Services

**Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA), Prevention Services, Adolescent Services, Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS), Adult Recovery Services, Harm Reduction Services, Youth Support Services**

350 Montevue Lane ▪ Frederick, MD 21702

Phone: 301-600-1755 ▪ Fax: 301-600-1781 or 301-600-3237 ▪ MD TTY: 1-800-735-2258

**Detention Center Treatment Programs** ▪ 7300 Marcie's Choice Lane ▪ Frederick, MD 21703

Phone: 301-600-3145 ▪ Fax: 301-600-3144 ▪ MD TTY: 1-800-735-2258

