



## INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

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## Carfentanil - Responder Safety Update

### EMERGENCY SERVICES BUREAU

Issue Date: May 02, 2017

Expiration Date: N/A

Applicability: All Personnel

#### MESSAGE

The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (Department) has received medical intelligence information regarding recent fatal overdoses in jurisdictions immediately surrounding Howard County involving the drug CARFENTANIL.

Carfentanil is in the same drug family as Fentanyl. This is a dangerous analogue and is much more potent than HEROIN or FENTANYL. CARFENTANIL is 10,000 times more potent than MORPHINE, 5,000 times more potent than HEROIN, and 100 times more potent than FENTANYL. Although the lethal dose is not specifically known, it is estimated that 200 micrograms of CARFENTANIL might be lethal.

Overdoses present with signs and symptoms likely to be seen with other opioids, primarily CNS depression, respiratory depression and constricted pupils.

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist and should reverse the effects of CAREFENTANIL overdoses, but it has been suggested that large doses might be required.

**This drug is extremely dangerous, even in very small doses and can pose a risk to responders.** Emergency responders could develop toxicity if exposed to potent opioids such as fentanyl and its analogues, especially CARFENTANIL. There have been case reports of personnel across the United States being sickened from such exposures.

Both FENTANYL and CARFENTANIL can be absorbed through the skin and the airborne powder can be inhaled. Personnel should continue to use universal precautions in all circumstances; this is especially true on overdose calls, even if you are not providing direct patient care.

Universal precautions should be followed by all personnel on the scene. For cases where Carfentanil is the known agent, protective measures previously identified in Special Order 2014.44: [Transport of Infectious Disease Patients Under Investigation for Ebola](#) are recommended.

Company officers are requested to review this material with their personnel. Further questions should be directed to the Office of the Medical Director and the Emergency Services Bureau.

Please see the following guidance from the CDC for more information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/fentanyl/risk.html>