

FEBRUARY 2026

Have you heard of **MEDETOMIDINE?**

WHAT IS IT?

Medetomidine is a tranquilizer – a veterinary sedative – that can be **200-300 times stronger than xylazine**.

WHERE IS IT?

Medetomidine has been **confirmed in Winnipeg's drug supply** in concerning amounts in recent samples (3.19%, 3.68%, and 5.5%). It's mostly found in drugs sold as "down" and sometimes mixed with opioids or other sedatives including pressed pills. Almost all recent (February 2026) samples of "down" checked by Street Connections have had medetomidine in them

WHAT DOES IT DO?

Medetomidine can cause **very long sedation** (hours), very low heart rate and blood pressure, and very slow breathing.

What do you need to know?

Naloxone helps but doesn't reverse medetomidine. Still give naloxone for the fentanyl - but the person will need medical care.

Medetomidine withdrawal can start quickly and be very serious. Sometimes people need to go to the hospital.

Bring this card to the hospital with you if you think you're experiencing medetomidine withdrawal.

MEDETOMIDINE OVERDOSE

- Deep and prolonged sedation
- Very low or no pulse
- Very slow or stopped breathing
- Poor or incomplete response to naloxone
- Effects can last 90 minutes to several hours, even longer when mixed with fentanyl

WHEN TO CALL 911/GO TO THE HOSPITAL:

- Can't stop throwing up
- Going in and out of being aware, even while awake
- Have chest pain
- Otherwise experiencing more severe withdrawal symptoms than expected from "down" or benzos

MEDETOMIDINE WITHDRAWAL (AFTER REGULAR USE):

- Very fast heartbeat
- Very high blood pressure
- Heavy sweating
- Shaking or twitching
- Anxiety and restlessness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Going in and out of being aware, even while awake

How to reduce risks:

Never use alone - Visit MOPS (631 Main St) or call National Overdose Response Service: 1-888-688-6677

Start with a very small amount to test potency

Get your drugs checked:

- Street Connections: 496 Hargrave St
Mon/Wed/Fri 8:30am-3:30pm
- Nine Circles: 705 Broadway
Tues/Wed/Thurs 10:00am-4:00pm
- MOPS: 631 Main St., Wed-Sun 12-4pm

Have naloxone - Distributed at many sites: gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/naloxone

More info:
streetconnections.ca/drug-alerts
204-981-0742

