Local Rehab Investigates Heroin vs. Fentanyl

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Wytheville, VA ? ReVIDA® Recovery is a local rehab that recently published an article investigating the differences and similarities between heroin and fentanyl. They have seen how the opioid epidemic has impacted the Appalachian communities and have provided a safe space to heal from opioid use disorders.

?Heroin has been around for centuries, since the discovery of the poppy plant and opium became relevant in B.C. times. All opiates are derived from the poppy plant, and most opioids are as well. Heroin is a semi-synthetic opioid and contains trace amounts of the plant. However, because it goes through chemical processing, heroin is more potent than natural opiates, such as morphine.

Fentanyl is a fully synthetic opioid meaning that it is man-made in a laboratory. When made legally, fentanyl serves a purpose for pain management in medical settings. However, illicit labs make fentanyl without government regulation or any regard for medicinal purposes. All opiates share a chemical structure, changing slightly at the end to variate between morphine or chemically synthesized opioids. Fentanyl follows this same chemical structure, but does not require the poppy plant to be made,? the article reads.

There are many similarities between fentanyl and heroin. Both are members of the opioid family, meaning they create similar effects by attaching to opioid receptors. These effects include drowsiness, dizziness,

slowed breathing, and nodding in and out of consciousness. Both substances pose a risk of overdose as well as developing dependence.

Heroin comes in different forms but a white, off-white, or brownish powder is most common. The powder can be snorted, smoked, ingested, or dissolved in water to make an injectable liquid. Black tar heroin is a sticky, tar-like version that can be smoked or injected. Heroin?s appearance can have different color variations depending on the cutting agents used to dilute the product and make it last longer.

Fentanyl comes in a white or off-white powder and can be dissolved in water to form a liquid. However, fentanyl has become one of the most popular cutting agents among dealers throughout the U.S. due to its cheap cost and the effects it produces. This heightens fentanyl?s presence in pills (both real and fake), other powdered substances (cocaine, meth, etc.), and other liquid substances.

?Heroin and fentanyl use disorders affect the person physically and mentally. Long-term opioid use can lead to depression, anxiety, and mood swings that put a strain on relationships. The person may become more withdrawn and give up activities they once loved. Heroin and fentanyl use disorders can become consuming, worsening mental health and making the person feel alone.

The physical effects of heroin and fentanyl use disorders can vary depending on the method of use. Those who smoke either substance will have breathing difficulties including lung infections and chronic coughing. Injecting heroin or fentanyl can result in collapsed veins, scarring at the injection sites, and abscesses. Sharing needles can lead to developing HIV/AIDS or hepatitis C. Prolonged heroin or fentanyl use weakens the immune system, making it difficult for the body to heal from constant infections,? the article continues.

Fentanyl can be mixed with heroin, and with substances being opioids, mixing the two in one sitting increases the risk of an overdose. Opioid overdoses are serious medical emergencies that require immediate attention. Narcan® (naloxone) can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose but it can take more than one dose to counteract the effects. Even after Narcan® (naloxone) is given and the person regains consciousness, medical attention is still needed.

ReVIDA® Recovery is a leading provider of medication-assisted treatment and outpatient programming in Tennessee and Virginia. They accept many insurance plans and Medicaid to ease access to treatment. Their team of Suboxone doctors has helped many to reclaim their lives from opioid use disorders.

To learn more about ReVIDA® Recovery, call 423-631-0432 or visit their website.
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Crossroads Treatment Center of Wytheville, VA

Our supportive and passionate staff is ready to help regardless of your past treatment experiences and at whatever stage of your journey you are in.

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