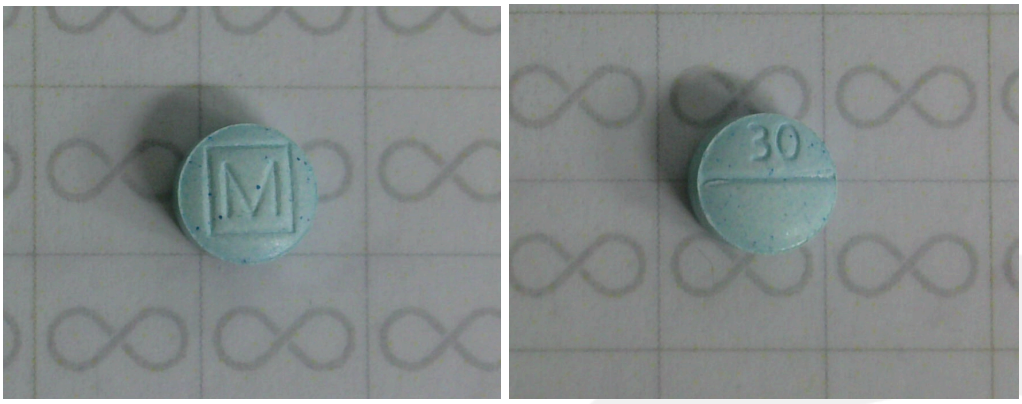
NITAZENE FOUND IN COUNTERFEIT OXYCODONE

26th of November 2024 (Brisbane, Queensland)

Summary

- CheQPoint Bowen Hills identified nitazene in a light blue tablet marked "M30", sold as oxycodone.
- We're doing more testing to figure out the specific nitazene(s) present - we'll let you know when we have more information.
- Nitazenes vary in strength, but some are stronger than fentanyl and up to 500 times more potent than heroin. This means a very small amount can lead to overdose.



What are nitazenes?

Nitazenes are a family of synthetic opioids, invented in the 1950's, but never used in medicine because they are too powerful. They vary in potency, but can be up to 500 times more potent than heroin.

Why are we concerned?

Nitazenes are dangerous and vary in strength – some nitazenes are so strong that a very small amount can result in overdose. The purity of the drug can also vary within a single batch. The risk of overdose from nitazenes is very high.

Signs of nitazene overdose

Nitazenes are synthetic opioids, which means that signs/symptoms of overdose are similar to heroin.

Look out for:

- Feeling really drowsy, slumping over ('on the nod')
- Pinpoint pupils
- Being cold and clammy
- Blue tinge to the lips or nails

If you notice these signs/symptoms and are concerned, call 000 and administer naloxone if available.

Equip yourself with naloxone

We recommend that anyone who uses drugs or is around someone who uses drugs keeps naloxone handy. Naloxone temporarily reverses opioid overdose.

As naloxone's reversal effects are temporary and nitazenes are very potent, you may need a higher and / or repeated doses.

If you don't see a response after 2-3 minutes, repeat the dose.

You can get naloxone for free at CheQpoint, participating pharmacies and organisations like QuIHN. For more information on where to get access to naloxone check: https://www.ppaonline.com.au/take-home-naloxone/

Unsure what you've got? Get it checked!

CheQpoint is a voluntary, free, and confidential drug checking service funded by Queensland Health, operated by QuIHN, QuIVAA and The Loop Australia.

We offer free and confidential health and harm reduction conversations with results to help people make more informed decisions about the drugs they are intending to use. For more information go to https://www.quihn.org/cheqpoint/.

Our locations and opening hours are:

GOLD COAST Fridays 2pm-6pm
QuIHN Gold Coast: Shop 12/89-99 West Burleigh Rd, Burleigh Heads QLD 4220

BRISBANE Fridays 2pm-6pm
QuIHN Brisbane: 1 Hamilton Pl, Bowen Hills QLD 4006