What's in Reno's Drug Supply?

Results - August 2026



What the Cut is a **free, confidential,** and **anonymous drug checking** program that analyzes tiny samples of drugs or drug residue to understand what's actually in them.

375

Since May 2024, we've tested 375 samples from Washoe County.

August samples: 30

We group sample results by what drug(s) they are expected to be.

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Information on treatment, naloxone, & test strips:

behavioralhealthnv.org 988lifeline.org

Expected methamphetamine: 11

11 / 11 (100%) had only methamphetamine

Expected fentanyl: 9

7 / 9 (78%) contained fentanyl

2 / 9 (78%) did not contain fentanyl

1 / 2 was methamphetamine

1 / 2 was methamphetamine and mannitol

Expected unknown: 5

3 had methamphetamine

1 / 3 with methamphetamine also contained mannitol

1 had fentanyl

1 had methamphetamine + fentanyl

Expected cocaine: 1

1 / 1 contained cocaine

Expected meth + fentanyl: 3

3 / 3 had meth + fentanyl

Summary

August's samples are consistent with the contents we typically see, with one change;

We didn't see a fentanyl sample that contained medetomidine.

In July, we saw 4 fentanyl samples containing small amounts of it.

Quantitative data from one sample with medetomidine showed:

16.7% fentanyl,
6.4% fentanyl byproducts,
and **0.5% medetomidine**.

So far, data tells us that medetomidine is in small quantities in some fentanyl samples, even though we didn't see new samples with it in August.

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Discard after: 11/29/2026

A Closer Look

Medetomidine: a local update

WHAT THE CUT

Next, we're following up on info we shared about medetomidine in our previous flyer.

Medetomidine is a non-opioid sedative.

We first saw medetomidine in fentanyl in May 2026.
As of 9/29/2026, we've seen it in 5 fentanyl samples total.

How common is medetomidine locally?

Medetomidine was found in 12% of fentanyl samples we tested in June and July.

Some people are calling this "rhino tranq".

How much medetomidine is in fentanyl?

Most was found in "trace amounts," or less than 1% of the total fentanyl sample.

But even in small amounts, medetomidine use can cause health problems needing urgent medical care.

What can you do?

- Use a test strip to confirm if medetomidine is present.
- Avoid using alone and be prepared for weird sensations.
- If someone overdoses on fentanyl with medetomidine in it, they may be really sedated. Prioritize rescue breathing.

Symptoms of medetomidine use?

Medetomidine use can cause unusual sensations like confusion, disorientation, and hallucinations.



Some people say it feels like they're drunk.

Disassociation and psychedelic visuals are common, but not universal signs of exposure.

Does it affect detox?

Medetomidine itself is dangerous, and it makes opioid withdrawal complicated, often needing medical care.

Withdrawal symptoms often include:

- Chest pain
- Nausea & vomiting
- Tremor
- Fast heart rate
- Rapid changes in alertness
- High blood pressure

If hospitals can test for it, doctors may be able to taper patients off of medetomidine.

Doctors need to know about it, and so do you!

Medetomidine can cause serious damage or death!

Talk with your doctors, trust your gut, and always seek medical attention if something feels off.

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