

What are Opioids?

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About Opioids:

- These are a **class of drugs** that derive from, or mimic, natural substances found in the opium poppy plant.
- All opioids work similarly: They **activate an area of nerve cells** in the brain and body called opioid receptors that block pain signals between the brain and the body.
- They produce a variety of effects, including pain relief and euphoria, and are highly addictive. Some common opioids include **oxycodone, morphine, codeine, heroin, and fentanyl**.
- **Opioid overdose:** Opioid use **can lead to death** due to the effects of opioids on the part of the brain which regulates breathing.
- An opioid overdose can be identified by a combination of three signs and symptoms: pinpoint pupils, unconsciousness and difficulties with breathing.

What is Fentanyl?

- It is a potent synthetic opioid drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use as an **analgesic [for pain relief] and anesthetic**.
- It is approximately 100 times more potent than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin as an analgesic.

Q1: What are analgesics?

Analgesics are medications that relieve pain. Unlike medications used for anesthesia during surgery, analgesics don't turn off nerves, change the ability to sense your surroundings or alter consciousness. They are sometimes called painkillers or pain relievers.

Source: Why fentanyl, reportedly the biggest killer of Americans aged 18-49, figured in Antony Blinken's China visit

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/opioids/>

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