

A new drug called medetomidine has been detected in Scotland.

Medetomidine is a depressant drug that causes sedative effects. It is a very strong veterinary medicine. It can cause drowsiness, confusion, nausea, sudden collapse and loss of consciousness. This can significantly increase the risk of overdose, especially when used alongside other drugs.

Medetomidine has been found in:

- brown powders sold as heroin
- white tablets sold as benzodiazepines
- crystals and powders sold as ketamine



Medetomidine mis-sold as diazepam.

Overdose

Overdose can happen quickly and unexpectedly.

Overdose signs might include:

- being unresponsive (will not wake when shaken)
- snoring or noisy breathing
- shallow (or slowed) breathing
- blue or pale lips and skin
- seizures or fits

In an emergency

- Stay calm, call 999 and ask for an ambulance.
- Give as much information as you can about what was taken.
- Stay with the person until help arrives.
- Naloxone should be given to anyone who is unresponsive and displaying the signs of an overdose.

Harm reduction

Follow harm reduction advice, with greater caution due to the risk of contamination:

- Use drugs in the company of other people and take turns to dose.
- Avoid mixing drugs knowingly, including alcohol and medicines.
- Take a smaller amount than you usually would and leave a long gap in between doses.
- Get naloxone from your local drug service or order from www.sfad.org.uk
- Find support at www.scottishdrugservices.com

To find out more, visit

publichealthscotland.scot/RADAR



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