

## Deadly 'Rainbow fentanyl' looks like candy, could entice kids

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The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is warning the public

that colorfully dyed [fentanyl](#)—dubbed "rainbow fentanyl"—is readily available across the United States.

"Rainbow [fentanyl](#)—fentanyl pills and powder that come in a variety of bright colors, shapes, and sizes—is a deliberate effort by [drug traffickers](#) to drive addiction amongst kids and [young adults](#)," said DEA administrator Anne Milgram.

"The men and women of the DEA are relentlessly working to stop the trafficking of rainbow fentanyl and defeat the Mexican drug cartels that are responsible for the vast majority of the fentanyl that is being trafficked in the United States," Milgram added in an agency news release.

The [DEA](#) and other [law enforcement officials](#) seized brightly colored fentanyl and fentanyl pills in 18 states in August. The confiscated drugs include pills, powders and blocks that resemble sidewalk chalk.

Despite assertions that some colors might be more potent than others, DEA laboratory testing has found no evidence to support these claims. Still, fentanyl is extremely dangerous, no matter the color, shape or size, the DEA said.

A synthetic opioid, fentanyl is 100 times more potent than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin. A lethal dose of fentanyl is thought to be as little as 2 milligrams, or about 10 to 15 grains of table salt. It is impossible to determine how much fentanyl is concentrated in a pill or powder without conducting laboratory testing, according to the DEA.

Moreover, fentanyl remains the most [lethal drug threat](#) to the United States. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 107,622 Americans overdosed and died in 2021, with synthetic opioids like fentanyl the cause of 66% of those deaths. Drug poisoning is

the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45.

If you encounter any form of fentanyl, refrain from handling it and call 911 immediately, the DEA advised.

**More information:** The DEA's [Fentanyl Awareness page](#) lists additional community and parental resources.

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