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HEADLINE: As Fentanyl Overdose Deaths Surge, CareHealth America Offers US-Made Fentanyl Test Strips

SUBHEAD: Fentanyl Test Strips Can Be An Effective Tool in Reducing Overdose Deaths

BLUE EARTH, MN, June 16, 2021 — Drug overdose deaths in the U.S. surged during 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic. The 12-month period ending August 2020 recorded the highest number of overdose deaths ever in the U.S., with a significant number attributed to drugs laced with fentanyl. In response to this troubling trend, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently approved the use of federal grant funds to purchase fentanyl test strips. CareHealth America, U.S. manufacturer of DrugCheck® rapid tests, offers fentanyl test strips that can help slow the surge.

“We must do all we can to save lives from drug overdoses,” said CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH. “The increase in drug overdose deaths related to synthetic opioids such as illicitly made fentanyl is a public health crisis that requires immediate action and novel strategies. State and local programs now have another tool to add to their on-the-ground efforts toward reducing and preventing overdoses, in particular fentanyl-related overdose deaths.”

Driving the increase in deaths, in part, is the more widespread availability and use — both knowingly and unknowingly — of highly potent, illicitly manufactured fentanyl and fentanyl analogues. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 80 to 100 times stronger than morphine. Because of its powerful opioid properties, fentanyl is also frequently diverted for abuse. The drug is often added to heroin to increase its potency or to disguise the heroin as being highly potent. Many users are led to believe that they are purchasing heroin, not knowing that it is actually fentanyl or fentanyl-laced heroin, which often results in overdose deaths.

In addition to changes in the drug supply, increasing use of illicit drugs in isolation is also a factor in the dramatic increase in deaths. According to the CDC, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in individuals using drugs alone at a far greater rate than in the past, as well as increased first-time and chronic use of these substances.

CareHealth America's DrugCheck® fentanyl test strip detects the drug at 10 ng/mL. The presence of fentanyl at levels above 10 ng/mL will result in a positive indication on the test strip. DrugCheck® fentanyl test strips provide results in about five minutes.

CareHealth America, located in Blue Earth, Minn., is the FDA-registered manufacturer of DrugCheck® rapid drugs of abuse tests. Through its U.S. manufacturing capabilities, CareHealth America provides its clients with a competitive advantage in the everchanging drug testing market. Visit drugcheck.com/fentanyl-test-strips, call 888-466-8433, or email sales@drugcheck.com to learn more.

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