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Harm Reduction - A Workshop:

“Research Perspectives from Abroad: Harm Reduction Interventions from the Cali/Baja Region”

National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine

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Online



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Disclaimer

I participate as an affiliated researcher with the following community organizations:

- Verter A.C., Mexicali, México
- Prevencasa A.C., Tijuana, México
- OnPoint SD, San Diego, USA
- Accion Tecnica Social, Bogota, Colombia

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US – Mexican Border

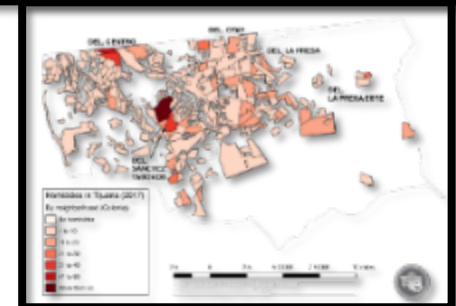
- Border region
 - Open-air drug markets, street injection and Overdose
 - Vulnerable populations: PWUD, homeless, Sex work, deportees
 - High levels of violence and HIV/HCV
 - Higher rates of heroin and methamphetamine consumption



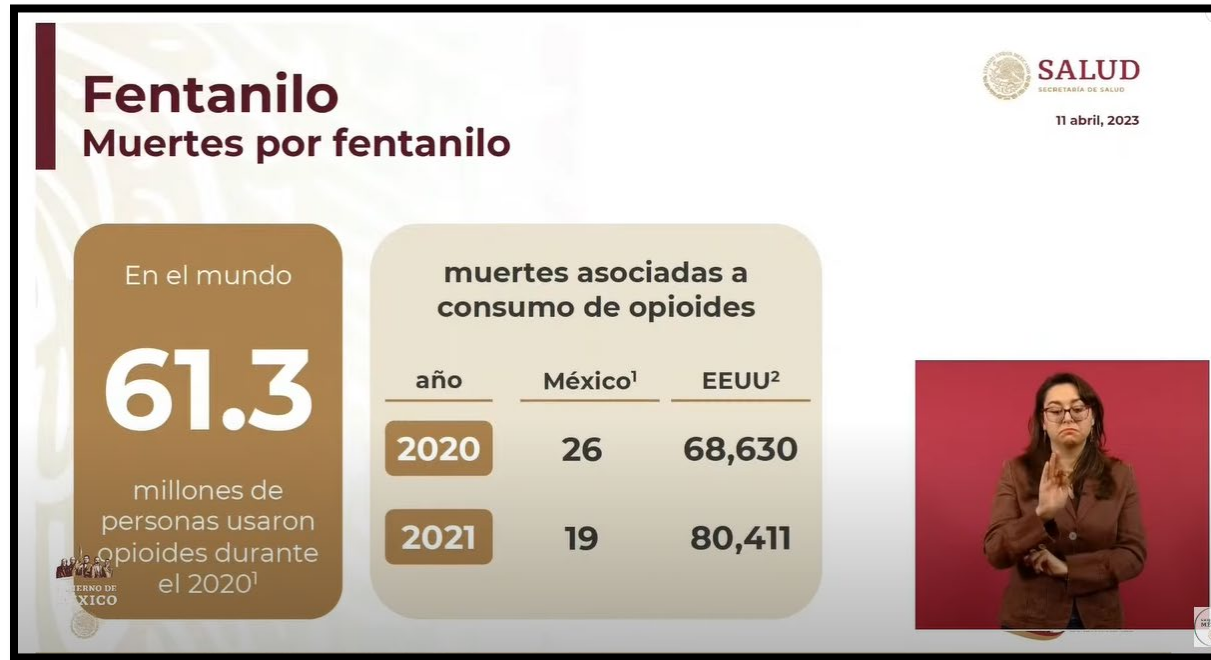
Source: jaime arredondo.



Source: Getty Images.



An Unknown/Denial Crisis



Source: Mx presidential daily briefing.

- There is a sub report in OD number in the country
- Government doesn't consider it a public health issue
- It's a border phenomenon (Tijuana, Mexicali, Nogales, Juarez)

Community Based Research Working with NGOs

- Drug Checking
 - Detection of Illicit Manufactured Fentanyl (IMF)
 - Understanding local drug market dynamics
- Overdose prevention
 - Naloxone training
 - Field Data Collection
 - Adapt harm reduction strategies (BCDCD, European Correlation Network)
- Collaborative Grants
 - Exploratory study measure IMF penetration and HIV risk in Tijuana, Mexico (Co-PI's, Beletsky, Friedman, Prevensca)
 - Safe Consumption Pilot intervention (Co-PI's, Goodman-Meza, Pitpitan, Verter)



Source: Hans-Maximo Musielik

Community Drug Checking U.S. – Mexico Border

- Tijuana, PrevenCasa A.C.
 - First test summer 2018
 - Suspected report from client
- Research project
 - Test used paraphernalia or paper wrappings
 - People who use our services at fixed and mobile sites
 - Identify hotspots for increased risk of overdose
 - New sampling mechanism
- Mexicali, Verter A.C.
 - First test summer 2019
 - Following the sustained trends in Tijuana (new M-30s)
- Intervention within safe consumption site (LA SALA)
 - Test wrappings and substance
 - For women who use the service
 - We can provide FTS to go

Generating Evidence

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Research Paper

Behavior change after fentanyl testing at a safe consumption space for women in Northern Mexico: A pilot study

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Cambios en el acceso a servicios de reducción de daños para personas que se inyectan drogas durante la pandemia por COVID-19 en Mexicali, Baja California

Pablo González Nieto, Said Slim & Lourdes Angulo^a
Mary C. Cambou & David Goodman-Meza^b
Jaime Arredondo Sánchez-Lira^c



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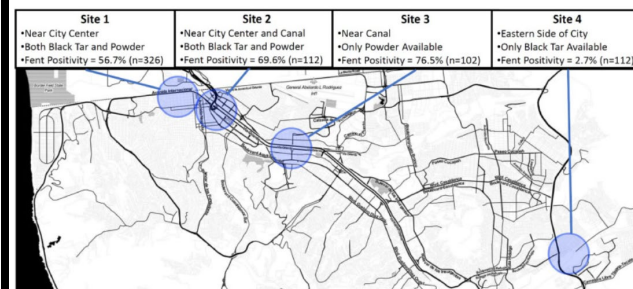
Volume 104, June 2022, 103678



Research Paper

The introduction of fentanyl on the US–Mexico border: An ethnographic account triangulated with drug checking data from Tijuana

Joseph Friedman^{a,b}, Philippe Bourgois^a, Morgan Godvin^{c,d}, Alfonso Chavez^e, Lilia Pacheco^{e,f}, Luis A. Segovia^e, Leo Beletsky^{d,g,h}, Jaime Arredondoⁱ



TESTEA TU SUSTANCIA

FENTANILO

- Tarda unos 5 minutos.
- Requiere una cantidad muy pequeña de la droga.
- Se puede hacer **antes (de preferencia)**, o **después** de usar.
- Puede detectar solo algunos análogos, lo que podría dar falsos negativos.

¿Cómo?

- En un vaso, diluye 1 gramo de tu sustancia en aproximadamente 30 ml de agua potable y desuete.
- Sumerge el extremo blanco de la tira por 15 segundos, (hasta la **línea azul**).
- Saca la tira del vaso y colócala sobre una superficie limpia.
- Espera entre 1 y 2 minutos para obtener los resultados.

• Si la sustancia analizada es un estimulante (cristal) y la prueba es **positiva**, agrega otros 30 ml de agua al vaso y prueba nuevamente con una nueva tira.

Las concentraciones elevadas de estimulantes pueden dar falsos positivos.

RESULTADOS

- Un resultado negativo, no significa que la sustancia es segura.
- Las tiras reactivas de fentanilo no son 100% precisas. Además, el fentanilo es solo una de muchas drogas que pueden causar una sobredosis.
- Las tiras reactivas para detectar fentanilo solo verifican si el fentanilo está presente en la porción analizada. No comprueban qué cantidad o qué tan fuerte es la sustancia.

Una línea significa
POSITIVO para fentanilo.

Dos líneas significan **NEGATIVO**, aunque la línea sea tenue.

POSITIVO

NEGATIVO

INVÁLIDO

INVÁLIDO si no marca ninguna de las dos líneas, o solo la "T".



Testing Stimulants

Pilot 4 cities - 2021

Detección de fentanilo en estimulantes: Resultados de un programa piloto en cuatro ciudades de México

Co- Investigadores: Jaime Arredondo Sánchez Lira,^a Alejandra García Loera,^b
Liliana García Loera,^b Alfonso Chávez,^c Pablo González Nieto,^d Guus Zwitter^e

- a. Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research, UVic - Victoria, Canada.
- b. Estudiantes por una Política Sensata de Drogas - Aguascalientes, Mx.
- c. Prevencasa A.C.- Tijuana, Mx.
- d. Verter A.C. – Mexicali, Mx.
- e. Programa de Política de Drogas, CIDE – Aguascalientes, Mx.

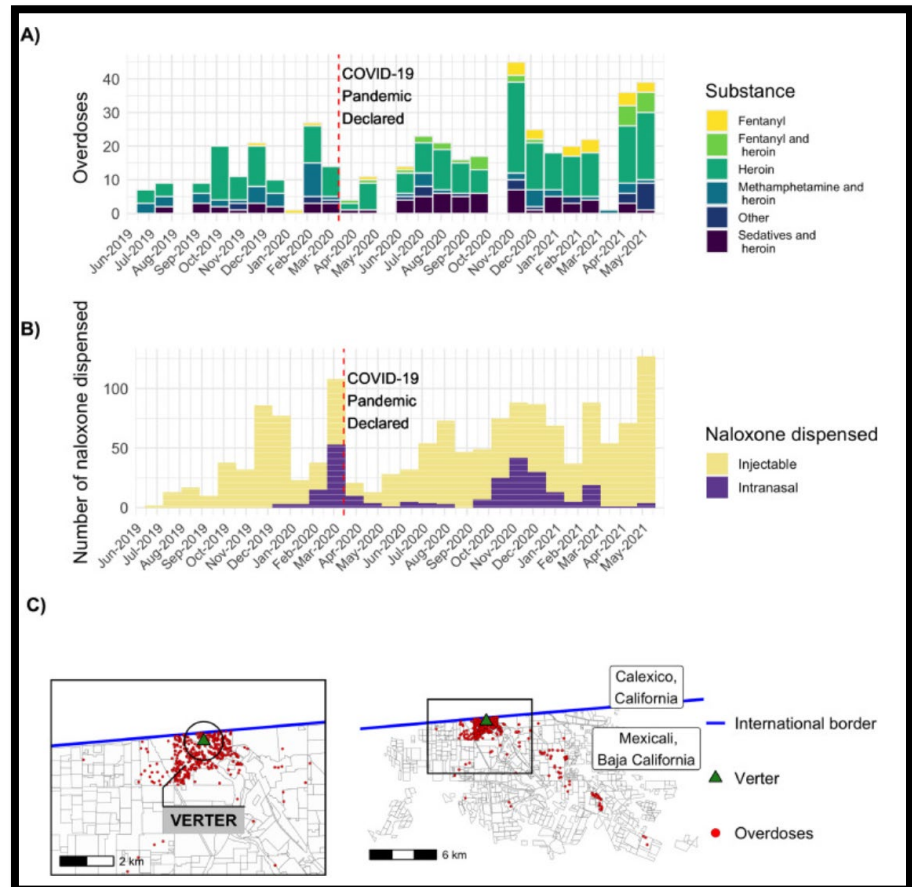
	AGS	CDMX	Tijuana	Mexicali	Total
Cocaína	14 (9%)	147 (92%)	7 (6%)	0	168 (35%)
MDMA	2 (1%)	12 (8%)	0	0	14 (3%)
Metanfetamina	135 (89%)	0	118 (94%)	50	303 (62%)
Total	151	159	125	50	485

Implementation of Safe Consumption Sites



- First SCS in under-resourced setting
 - Adopted model of overdose prevention site
 - Women only service (five in the world)
 - Unsanctioned strategy, tolerated but not regulated
 - Addressing health inequities in the Global South

Generating Results



Expanding Services into New Settings



Tijuana, Mexico – La Zona



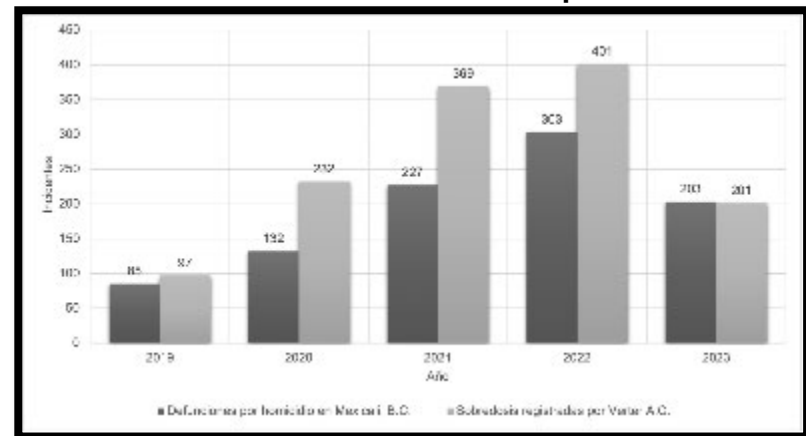
Colombia – Cambie

- Development of more services in Baja and abroad
 - New unsanctioned site in Tijuana
 - LA ZONA, with inhalation area
 - Combine with drug checking
 - New model replicated in South America, ATS-Bogota
 - Knowledge exchange within the Global South

Additional Considerations

- Understanding the challenges of acting under a violent setting
 - Harm reduction actions can be limited
 - Pipe distribution has stopped in Mexicali
 - Drug checking results could create conflict with local organized crime
 - M-30 Pills are banned locally
 - Need to create new metrics to emphasize the importance of interventions
 - Compare to violence levels in our communities

Homicides vs OD responses



City of Mexicali
Verter

Shifting Public Policy

THE LANCET *Regional Health Americas*

PERSONAL VIEW | VOLUME 23, 100535, JULY 2023



PDF [266 KB]

Implementing a decentralized opioid overdose prevention strategy in Mexico, a pending public policy issue

Raúl Bejarano Romero • Jaime Arredondo Sánchez-Lira • Said Slim Pasaran • Alfonso Chávez Rivera •

Lourdes Angulo Corral • Anabel Salimian • Jorge J. Romero Vadillo • David Goodman-Meza • • [Show less](#)

Factors that put the country at risk

Lack of a comprehensive overdose surveillance system.

A national campaign that approaches substance use from a moral rather than a public health perspective.

Criminalization and violation of human rights of people who use substances by public security forces.

Limited access to evidence-based interventions to minimize the risk of opioid use disorder.

No availability of naloxone in community overdose prevention schemes and emergency services (e.g., Red Cross and police).

Potential measures to limit risk factors

Creation of mechanisms and materials for overdose documentation in community settings, forensic medical services, and emergency services (e.g., Red Cross and police).

Design evidence-based campaigns and training on substance use treatment and overdose care with naloxone such as talks and workshops to law enforcement members and decision makers rooted in harm reduction and public health.

Harm reduction and occupational health training programs for members of the security forces of the three levels of government (e.g., municipal and state police, National Guard, Army and Navy).

Implement a free national opioid treatment scheme with methadone or buprenorphine, substance testing, syringe exchange and safe consumption rooms.

Equip and train those most likely to witness an overdose (e.g., key populations, community organizations, and emergency services) with naloxone.

Table 1: Summary of factors that put Mexico at risk of developing an opioid overdose epidemic and interventions to mitigate risk factors.

Key Messages

- Presence of Fentanyl
 - NOT in everything
 - Centered around illegal opioids
 - Mainly border phenomenon
- Overdose Prevention
 - Naloxone Saves Lives
 - SCS help reduce risk for HIV and OD
- Radical Shift in Drug Policy
 - Funding for community organizations
 - Generate public government data
 - Foster collaborations Mexico/Canada/USA between governments/civil society/academia



Previncasa – Tj

Thank you

- To the Community Organizations that have allowed me to work at the border
 - The staff – Verter, Prevencasa, OnPoint
 - Mentors – Steffanie Strathee, Kenneth Tupper, Avelardo Valdez
 - Co-PIs – David Goodman, Leo Beletsky
 - International Donors, OSF
- To the People who use drugs in our Community: Without out them we could not conduct research and understand their needs

