



Massachusetts Drug Supply Stream (MADDS)

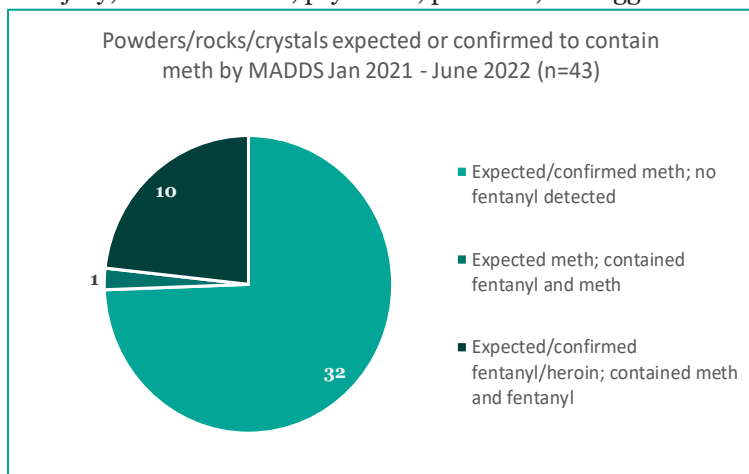
Community Drug Supply Bulletin: Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine is on the rise in Massachusetts

- From January 2021 to June 2022, methamphetamine was detected in 77 of 1357 (6%) drug samples tested by MADDS.*
- Of the 77 samples where methamphetamine was detected, 62 were pills/powders/crystals/rocks and 15 were residues in cookers and smoking materials. Samples showed both unexpected fentanyl in methamphetamine but also unexpected methamphetamine in fentanyl samples (see chart below)
- Of 15 counterfeit Adderall pills, all (100%) contained methamphetamine with no evidence of pharmaceutical-grade amphetamine. No counterfeit Adderall pills were found to contain fentanyl.

Methamphetamine is a health risk

- Amphetamines are stimulants that focus attention, eliminate fatigue, decrease appetite, elevate mood, and cause euphoria. Methamphetamine is an amphetamine that is faster-acting than common prescription amphetamines, like Adderall.
- Effects of methamphetamine use include abnormal heart rhythm, increased heart rate and blood pressure, kidney injury, hallucinations, psychosis, paranoia, and aggression.



Methamphetamine was detected in 43 powder/rock/crystal samples (excluding 19 counterfeit pills and 15 items that may have been reused). While most methamphetamine samples did not contain fentanyl, of the 11 that did, 10 were sold as fentanyl/heroin.



[Click here](#) or scan for more information on MADDS, drug checking, and the drug supply in Massachusetts.

Because methamphetamine is becoming a more prevalent active cut in opioids, individuals presenting with polysubstance use may not be intentionally using methamphetamine in combination with opioids. Ask before developing a treatment plan for polysubstance use.

How to identify methamphetamine

- Methamphetamine often appears as a white crystalline solid, a clear crystal, or a white bitter-tasting powder or in a pill. Visually, methamphetamine may be mistaken for other powders.
- Methamphetamine may cause false positives with fentanyl test strips. When using test strips to detect fentanyl in drugs expected to be methamphetamine, dilute with 30 mL water, about a shot glass worth.



Methamphetamine may appear as white crystals, white powders, or pressed pills.

Harm Reduction and Risk of Overdose

- Taking too much of a stimulant such as methamphetamine is called “overamping” and may lead to overheating, heart attacks, seizures, or strokes. In case of overamping, **keep calm and call for help**.
- While no overdoses were associated with samples only containing methamphetamine, combining fentanyl or other opioids with stimulants such as methamphetamine (goofballing) increases the risk for overdose.
- The drug supply is unpredictable. Drug checking and using when other people are around can help. When using with other people, take turns to avoid simultaneous overdose.
- In case of overdose, **administer naloxone (e.g., Narcan) and call for help!** Naloxone is available at harm reduction programs and retail pharmacies without a prescription. Check with your local harm reduction program for availability and for safer smoking supplies, fentanyl test strips, advice on safer use, and drug checking with MADDS.

* All samples were provided by harm reduction programs or donated by police departments for MADDS testing. MADDS is a state-funded collaboration between Brandeis University researchers, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, various town police departments, and local harm reduction agencies. Contact us at maddsbrandeis@gmail.com.