fentaNYL Patch Administration

fentaNYL is classified as a high-alert opioid medication. It relieves pain by acting on specific nerve cells/opioid receptors of the spinal cord and the brain. Life-threatening breathing problems can occur while taking fentaNYL, especially if it is not taken as directed. Each fentaNYL patch can relieve pain for up to 72 hours. The initial dose of the fentaNYL patch is individualized and based on the resident's current opioid therapy. Once the patch is applied to the resident's skin, medication starts to be released into the blood stream through a continuous release cycle.

Understanding the risks involved with fentaNYL use is important to resident safety as well as the safety of those handling the patch. The transdermal patch medication delivery system allows fentaNYL to be absorbed through the skin at a constant rate. Touching the “medication side” of a fentaNYL patch can cause a fatal overdose in individuals who have not been prescribed this medication (especially children). Avoid any accidental contact between the patch and other individuals by administering according to guidelines and disposing of the used patches appropriately.

**Note:** Even “used” fentaNYL patches contain active medication and can cause harm to others.

### Side effects of fentaNYL include but are not limited to:

- Drowsiness, dizziness, light-headedness, fainting
- Nausea, vomiting, poor appetite, dry mouth
- Headache, problems with vision
- Itching, sweating
- Weakness, uncoordinated muscle movement
- Constipation
- Confusion
- Insomnia
- Skin irritation at application site

### Signs of a fentaNYL OVERDOSE include but are not limited to:

- Trouble breathing: Shallow or very slow breathing
- Extreme drowsiness, sleepiness, tiredness
- Inability to think, talk or walk normally
- Feeling faint, dizzy or confused

**Note:** If a resident is exhibiting signs of overdose, check all areas of their skin and remove any patches. Wash the area with water and seek immediate emergency medical help.
The Do’s and Don’ts of fentaNYL Patch Administration

**DO:**

• Follow your home’s policy on fentaNYL administration. It is recommended that a daily check is conducted to confirm the patch location and therefore ensure that the patch has not become dislodged or accidentally removed.
• Report immediately any findings of no patch or a patch found at a different location than the documentation indicates.
• Choose the location on the body where the patch is going to be applied before you remove it from its protective wrapper.
• Tear the protective wrapper with your fingers to avoid damaging the patch.
• Notify the Physician if a resident has a high fever as this may increase the absorption rate of the fentaNYL.
• Change the patch every 72 hours (in some cases the Physician may order the fentaNYL patch change every 48 hours).
• Ensure all dose adjustments are made only on the order of a Physician.
• Ensure the resident is not allergic to fentaNYL or any of the other ingredients in the patch and check with your Remedy’sRx Pharmacist regarding potential interactions with the residents existing medications.
• Use the special labels provided with the patch (or a marker) to write the date and time of application directly on the label/patch.
• Ensure skin is completely dry before application and then firmly press the patch in place and hold for 30 seconds.
• Discard the patch properly if the patch falls off and apply a new patch at a different skin site, making sure to document the event.
• Document the patch removal/application date, time and site. It is important to develop a tracking system for fentaNYL patch removal and therefore assist in preventing medication incidents that may place the resident at risk of opioid toxicity or interrupt the resident’s pain management.
• Check with a Physician if a resident has significantly reduced body fat or muscle mass (cachectic) as the absorption and/or distribution of fentaNYL may be altered resulting in the need for dosage adjustments.
• Monitor the effectiveness of the patch in pain management as well as monitor for side effects and signs of overdose. Report signs of a suspected overdose immediately.
• Store fentaNYL patches as per your home’s policy for narcotic and controlled medications (Keep all discontinued, used or expired fentaNYL patches stored in a secure place to prevent drug diversion, misuse or accidental exposure).
• Dispose of used patches safely by folding the sticky sides together and following your home’s policy.
• Wash your hands with large amounts of WATER if the medication adhesive layer of the patch accidentally touches your skin.
• Determine the location of a fentaNYL patch on admission of a NEW resident and document the patch location including the date and time of the patch application.

**DO NOT:**

• Clean the application site with anything other than water, including alcohol, soap or other solvents which may alter the absorption of the fentaNYL.
• Use patches which are damaged.
• Cut the patch to adjust a dosage, as this affects the absorption of the medication and could result in overdose.
• Use scissors to remove the patch from the wrapper.
• Remove the patch from its protective wrapper until you are ready to apply it.
• Use fentaNYL patches in opioid naïve residents or for the management of post-operative pain. FentaNYL patches are ONLY to be used to treat persistent moderate to severe chronic pain in a resident that is already receiving opioid therapy for an extended period of time and at a total daily dose of at least 60mg/day oral morphine equivalents.
• Use fentaNYL patches for management of short-term acute pain. It is NOT indicated as a PRN (as-needed) analgesic.
• Shave the area where the patch is to be applied. If necessary, hair may be clipped with scissors prior to application of the patch.
• Apply the patch to broken skin, or skin with rashes, cuts, scars or sores.
• Expose the patch site to heat sources. Avoid heat on the site of application as this increases the absorption of fentaNYL through the skin and places the resident at risk of overdose. Examples of heat sources include; heating pad, prolonged sun exposure, long hot baths, hot whirlpool spa bath or a high fever.
• Apply a new patch until the existing patch is removed.
• Use fentaNYL if the resident has severe asthma, trouble breathing or other lung problems or a bowel blockage or narrowing of the stomach or intestines.
• Throw away a used patch into the trash or a regular garbage bin.
• Use during pregnancy.