

Queensland Drug Warning

Clinical Alert

New nitazene (strong opioid) Protodesnitazene detected

A new nitazene called Protodesnitazene has been detected in Queensland in a toxicology sample and in a brown, chalky powder.

Protodesnitazene has not been previously detected in Australia.

Unconfirmed information available suggests the sample was mis-sold as Desmetramadol or O-DSMT.

Nitazenes are a group of very strong opioids that work like heroin or fentanyl and can produce life-threatening toxicity in small amounts.

Toxic Effects

The toxic effects of nitazenes are similar to other opioids and include:

- Sedation
- Coma
- Slow or obstructed breathing
- Respiratory failure that can lead to death.

These effects respond to naloxone, and it should be used if available (more information on accessing naloxone below).



Information and Advice

This information is intended for distribution through clinical networks and service providers who work with people who use drugs. The below advice can be provided by practitioners to clients and to support harm reduction messaging.

*Queensland Health advises that if you suspect you have this powder, please **do not consume** and dispose of it safely.*

Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you know experiences any toxic effects following drug use.

Naloxone will reverse an opioid overdose; it is available for free from registered pharmacies and services through the national Take Home Naloxone program. Use this link to find your closest site participating in the program [Take Home Naloxone \(THN\) Program Participating Site Locator \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

Nitazene test strips can be useful but are not entirely effective in screening for all nitazenes, this sample provided a negative result on a nitazene test strip and was confirmed as protodesnitazene in a laboratory.

For help

- Call **Triple Zero (000)** for emergency assistance
- Go to your nearest emergency department
- Call the **Queensland Poisons Information Centre (13 11 26)**
- **Adis 24/7 Alcohol and Drug Support (1800 177 833 or www.adis.health.qld.gov.au)**
- **Peer Qnect** confidential telephone peer support (1800 175 889)