

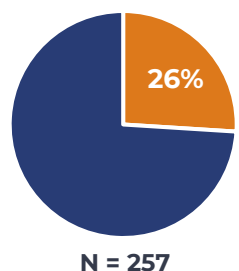
Harm Reduction Awareness and Preparedness Among Adults in San Diego County Jails (2025)

To better understand the backgrounds, experiences, and drug use patterns of justice-involved individuals, the Substance Use Monitoring (SUM) program conducts confidential interviews and voluntary drug tests with people recently booked into San Diego County jails. In 2025, new survey questions assessed respondents' knowledge of harm reduction strategies and access to prevention resources. With fentanyl continuing to drive overdose deaths in San Diego, harm reduction tools remain critical. Findings suggest that despite broad awareness, significant gaps persist in access, training, and practical use among individuals at elevated risk of overdose. A full summary of 2025 SUM findings is available in our newest bulletin, [2025 Adult Arrestee Drug Use in the Region](#).

Highlight 1: Over one-fourth of respondents have experienced an overdose

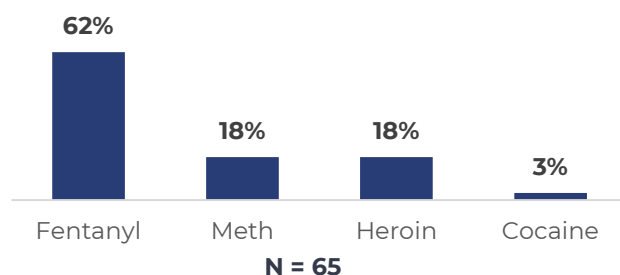
Drug overdose affects a substantial proportion of justice-involved adults. In 2025, more than one in four respondents (26%) reported ever experiencing a drug overdose, an increase from 19% reported in 2024. Among those who had overdosed, nearly two-thirds (62%) identified fentanyl as the substance responsible.

Figure 1: Percentage of Respondents Who Reported an Overdose



Source: SANDAG, 2025

Figure 2: Drugs Involved in Reported Overdoses

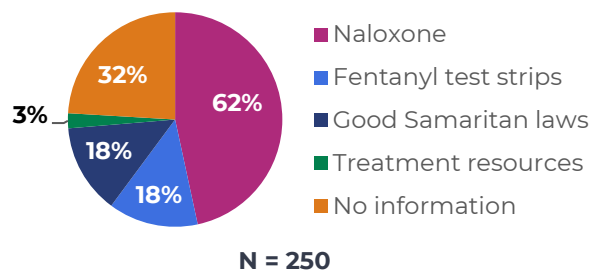


Source: SANDAG, 2025

Highlight 2: Exposure to harm reduction information remains uneven

Many respondents reported receiving information about harm reduction, but awareness varied considerably across topics. Nearly two-thirds (64%) had received information about naloxone, while fewer had learned about fentanyl test strips, Good Samaritan laws, or local prevention and treatment resources. Nearly one in three respondents (32%) reported receiving no information on any of these topics.

Figure 3: Percentage of Respondents with Harm Reduction Information

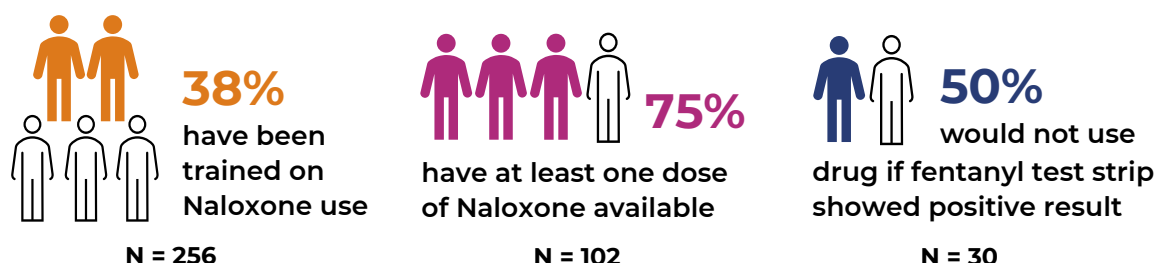


Note: Percentages based on multiple responses.
Source: SANDAG, 2025

Highlight 3: Many respondents report using harm reduction tools when available

When respondents had access to harm reduction tools, many reported using them in ways that could help reduce overdose risk. Nearly two in five (38%) reported receiving naloxone training, and more than one in four (27%) reported administering naloxone to someone else during an overdose. Among those who had ever obtained naloxone, three-quarters (75%) reported currently having at least one dose readily available, suggesting that many are keeping it on hand for potential use. Respondents also reported using fentanyl test strips to inform decisions about substance use; among those who had ever used test strips, half (50%) said they would not continue to use a substance if it tested positive for fentanyl.

Figure 4: Awareness and Use of Overdose Prevention Tools Among Respondents

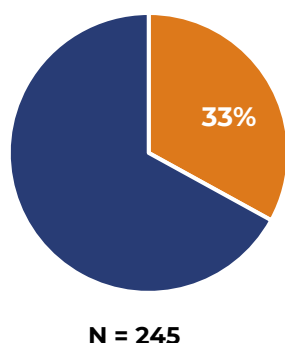


Source: SANDAG, 2025

Highlight 4: Potential fentanyl exposure highlights gaps in preparedness

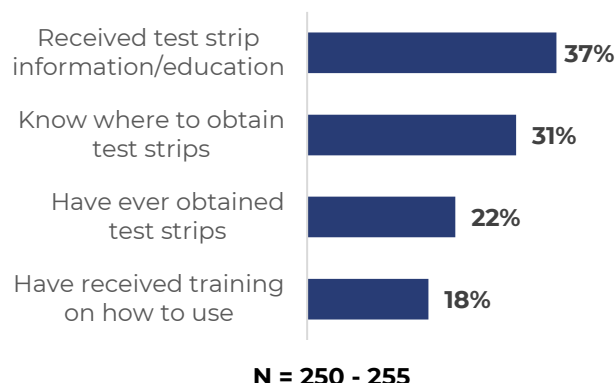
While some respondents reported using harm reduction tools when available, many may face fentanyl exposure without having the resources needed to respond. In 2025, one-third (33%) of respondents believed they had unknowingly used a substance containing fentanyl based on their reaction to a drug. Yet access to information and resources remains limited. Only 37% reported ever receiving information about fentanyl test strips, while fewer knew where to obtain them (31%), had ever obtained them (22%), or had received training on how to use them (18%).

Figure 5: Suspected Unintentional Fentanyl Exposure



Source: SANDAG, 2025

Figure 6: Fentanyl Test Strip Awareness and Preparedness



Source: SANDAG, 2025

