



# ILCAAAP

Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

## Drug Alert - April 24, 2023



### **The horrors of 'xylazine,' the 'zombie drug' roiling Chicago and New York**

Parts of human tendons appeared exposed in at least one case this past weekend.

Most likely, the gruesome sight results from seeing the effects of someone using the veterinary tranquilizer xylazine, colloquially tranq. Commonly mixed with the synthetic opioid fentanyl and obtained with relative ease, xylazine — pronounced "ZY-la-seen" — is sometimes called the "zombie drug" in acknowledgment of its flesh-eating properties. It's not an exaggeration to say that the jarring sight of the horrific physical effects on humans of this horse tranquilizer recalls the fictional wounds visible on characters in the dystopian TV show "The Last of Us."

Xylazine, which has no FDA-approved use in humans, is becoming a massive problem in New York and Chicago. Why do people mix the two drugs? In essence, adding xylazine extends the duration of the fentanyl high. And for those who traffic in the misery of others, creating this horrific cocktail increases profitability.

Last month, the federal Drug Enforcement Administration issued a harshly worded warning: "Xylazine is making the deadliest drug threat our country has ever faced, fentanyl, even deadlier."

The DEA said it had "seized xylazine and fentanyl mixtures in 48 of 50 states. The DEA Laboratory System reports that in 2022 approximately 23% of fentanyl powder and 7% of fentanyl pills seized by the DEA contained xylazine." [READ](#)

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