

PA GROUNDHOGS



PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

OVERDOSE CLUSTER: BLAIR COUNTY

At least 10 individuals overdosed in a span of 12 hours on an unknown opioid in Blair County—which is in the central part of Pennsylvania, about two hours from Pittsburgh. Victims included five inmates detained at Blair County Prison, in Hollidaysburg, PA, who were found overdosing and brought to UPMC Altoona for treatment. One of the inmates remains in a medically induced coma, according to local media reports.

PA Groundhogs--Pennsylvania's free statewide drug checking service--began monitoring the situation in Blair County on the afternoon of April 10, after receiving reports of an overdose outbreak emerging in Logan Township and the City of Altoona. Starting around 3pm and continuing through the early evening emergency service personnel attended to five people who suffered adverse reactions after consuming an unidentified drug in the area around Altoona.

The next day Blair County Commissioner David Kessler [talked to reporters](#) about the overdoses inside Blair County Prison.

County officials suspect fentanyl is to blame for the overdoses. While our data is still limited, mass spectrometry analysis conducted by PA Groundhogs (PAG) has identified Blair County as a source for high purity fentanyl, with one retail sample exceeding 30 percent pure. PAG has obtained a sample of the substance responsible for the current overdose outbreak. It is currently on its way to our lab partners at the Center for Forensic Science, Research & Education for further analysis.

We will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as information becomes available.

If you use illicit opioids in Blair County, or its surrounding counties, please use caution. Go slow and never use alone. For information on acquiring the

overdose reversal drug naloxone, please visit the PA Department of Public Health's naloxone access page [here](#)

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