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Harm reduction vending machine will dispense free, lifesaving tools to help prevent overdose deaths

Vending machine, available 24/7 in Eau Claire County Jail lobby, will provide free Narcan, fentanyl test strips

Eau Claire, WI, June 15, 2023 – In a new approach to distribute life-saving harm reduction tools in Eau Claire County, two local agencies have partnered to install a vending machine that will distribute free Narcan and fentanyl test strips. The Eau Claire County Sheriff's Office and the Eau Claire City-County Health Department are collaborating to make the vending machine available to the community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The vending machine is located in the front lobby of the Eau Claire County Jail, 710 2nd Ave., Eau Claire. Anyone can enter the lobby to access the machine between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. daily. For lobby access after 4:30 p.m. or on weekends, people can press a button to be buzzed in by a dispatcher. The vending machine is programmed to dispense Narcan and fentanyl test strips for free. **Anyone can use the machine with no questions asked, at any time of day.**

What's available at the vending machine:

- **Narcan**, also called naloxone, is a lifesaving medication that can reverse a known or suspected opioid overdose. Narcan is a nasal spray that is easy to administer and legal to carry in Wisconsin.
- **Fentanyl test strips** can detect the presence of fentanyl, a very strong opioid, in other drugs. Test strips are dipped into a small portion of a drug that's dissolved in water, and within minutes, a person can know if the drug contains fentanyl. Drugs mixed with fentanyl are the leading cause of overdose deaths in Wisconsin.
- Along with Narcan and fentanyl test strips, the vending machine will also dispense instructions and training on how to use both tools. Instructions are available in English, Hmong, and Spanish.

The impact of opioid misuse on communities has been devastating. Fentanyl-related overdose is now the top cause of death in Wisconsin residents ages 25 to 54, a recent [study](#) found. In Eau Claire County, opioid-related deaths increased by 83% between 2015 and 2021. Making overdose prevention tools like Narcan and fentanyl test strips widely available is one step we can take to respond to the impact of drug use and involve our community in prevention efforts.

“We know Narcan and fentanyl test strips save lives. We hope this public health vending machine project will help our community access these two important tools, and help us in the fight to stop preventable, overdose-related deaths,” says Sarah Dillivan-Pospisil, Public Health Specialist with the Eau Claire City-County Health Department.

The vending machine project comes at no cost to the public. The cost of the vending machine and supplies are supported by grants from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Vending machines that dispense Narcan and/or fentanyl test strips have been implemented around the country and in several Wisconsin communities like the [city of Greenfield](#) and [Rock County](#), among others.

The public can also obtain Narcan and fentanyl test strips at Vivent Health, 505 S. Dewey St. #107, Eau Claire. For more information on using Narcan, fentanyl test strips, or other overdose prevention resources, visit www.GetInvolvedASAP.org.

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