



# OVERDOSE RESPONSE STRATEGY

PUBLIC HEALTH | PUBLIC SAFETY | PARTNERSHIP



September 2024  
GCHIDTA-ARORS-BU0016-2024

## Emerging Threat Bulletin

### N-Desethyl Isotonitazene (Isotonitazene) “M-30” Pills Discovered at Los Angeles International Air Facility

#### Purpose:

(U): The objective of this bulletin is to notify Arkansas Law Enforcement Official, Medical Examiners and Coroners about the recent discovery and seizure of N-Desethyl Isotonitazene (Isotonitazene) “M-30 Pills” by U.S. Customs & Border Protection Officers (CBP) at the Los Angeles International Mail Facility on May 2, 2024.<sup>1</sup> There is no indication that Isotonitazene has been identified in Arkansas to date; however, the DEA reports that N-Desethyl Isotonitazene has been observed in other Southern states.<sup>2</sup>

#### Background:

(U): On May 2, 2024, CBP officers at Los Angeles International Mail Facility conducted a physical examination of a parcel revealing two small, clear, plastic zip-lock bags containing blue color round tablets imprinted with a “M” inside a square on one side, and “30” marking on the other side. CBP Laboratory Scientific Services testing of the blue tablets presumptively identified N-Desethyl Isotonitazene (Isotonitazene), a Schedule I Controlled Substance. On July 9, 2024, CBP formally seized the tablets, totaling gross weight of 49.3 grams. The parcel was shipped from Hong Kong and was destined to a residence in California.<sup>3</sup>



Source: CBP Field Office “M-30” Pills Seized by CBP in Los Angeles on 7-9-2024



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(U): *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene is an active opioid agonist and is approximately 20x more potent than Fentanyl.<sup>4</sup> *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene is a new synthetic opioid bearing structural resemblance to Isotonitazene and recently emergent Nitazene analogues. *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene is dissimilar in chemical structure to Fentanyl, the synthetic opioid most commonly encountered, but this subclass of new opioids has been proliferating in the wake of the scheduling of Fentanyl analogues. *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene is a known metabolite of Isotonitazene; however, it has now emerged as a primary drug in its own right. Most Nitazene analogues encountered retain opioid receptor activity and potency similar to or greater than fentanyl.<sup>5</sup>

(U): The DEA reported that they first identified *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene around 2019 in the Midwest, but since then this dangerous drug has moved into Southern states and, more recently, along the Eastern seaboard.<sup>6</sup> In powder form, *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene can appear yellow, brown, or off-white in color. DEA Regional Forensic Laboratories have seen this drug mixed into heroin and/or fentanyl (and marketed as common street drugs) with deadly consequences. However, in other parts of the country, *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene has already been seen pressed into counterfeit pills and falsely marketed as pharmaceutical medication (like Dilaudid "M-8" tablets and Oxycodone "M30" tablets).<sup>7</sup>



DEA Photographs Depicting *N*-Desethyl Isotonitazene Powder



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For questions or to provide additional information please contact [ARORSA@gchidta.org](mailto:ARORSA@gchidta.org).

Feedback can be provided at: <https://www.nhac.org/SurveySite/SurveyPage.aspx?LMSID=6164f132-c85e-4b9a-a1cc-cec4699f3811>

This report was prepared based on information received from:

<sup>1</sup> CBP Field Office Intelligence Bulletin 7-9-2024

<sup>2</sup> New, Dangerous Synthetic Opioid in D.C., Emerging in Tri-State Area (dea.gov)

<sup>3</sup> CBP Field Office Intelligence Bulletin 7-9-2024

<sup>4</sup> New Potent Synthetic Opioid—N-Desethyl Isotonitazene—Proliferating Among Recreational Drug Supply in USA (cfsre.org)

<sup>5</sup> New Potent Synthetic Opioid—N-Desethyl Isotonitazene—Proliferating Among Recreational Drug Supply in USA (cfsre.org)

<sup>6</sup> New, Dangerous Synthetic Opioid in D.C., Emerging in Tri-State Area (dea.gov)

<sup>7</sup> New, Dangerous Synthetic Opioid in D.C., Emerging in Tri-State Area (dea.gov)



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