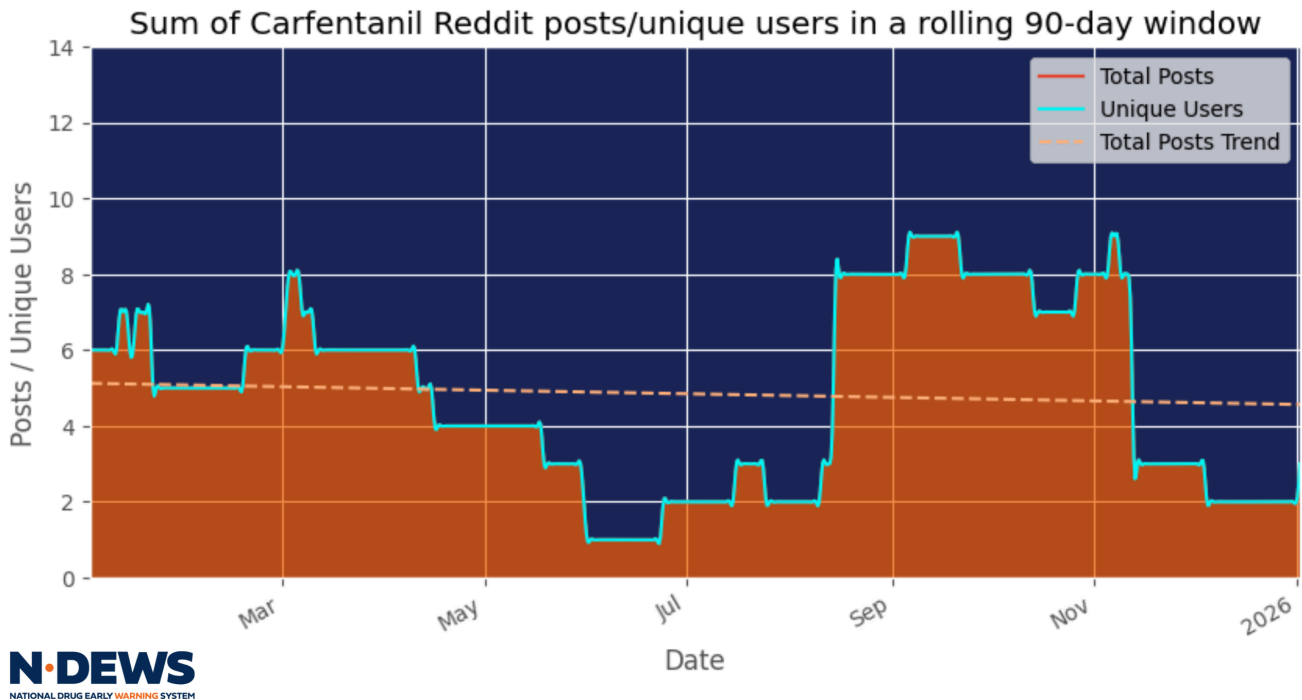


## Alert from the NDEWS Web Monitoring Team Reddit mentions of Carfentanil



**Why are we reporting on this?** The use of carfentanil, a synthetic opioid estimated as being 100 times more potent than fentanyl and 10,000 times more potent than morphine, is a significant public health concern due to its presence in the illicit drug supply ([DEA, 2025](#)). Intended as a large-animal tranquilizer, Reddit discussions indicate its emergence as a primary substance of use for highly tolerant individuals and its presence as a lethal adulterant in "street dope," counterfeit "M30" pills, and other illicit substances. Discussants describe extreme difficulties in managing withdrawal, the failure to be able to detect the substance via drug checking, and the severe risk of overdose associated with its high potency.

**What is Carfentanil?** Carfentanil is an ultra-potent fentanyl analog used in veterinary medicine to sedate large animals, such as elephants. In the illicit market, it is often found as a white or off-white powder and is frequently surreptitiously mixed into heroin, fentanyl, and other counterfeit pills to increase profit margins or potency.

**Public Health Impacts:** Reddit discussants report that carfentanil use leads to a rapid and massive escalation in opioid tolerance, rendering standard fentanyl and medical grade oxycodone ineffective for the management of withdrawal or achieving desired effects. Commenters describe a high risk of precipitated withdrawal when attempting to transition to buprenorphine or methadone, noting that traditional induction protocols often fail due to the substance's potency and unpredictable half-life. Multiple commenters report that standard fentanyl test strips may produce false negatives for carfentanil, creating a dangerous sense of false security. Furthermore, commenters highlight the inadequacy of standard medical responses in emergency departments, where staff may be unfamiliar with the clinical management of carfentanil-related complications.

**How is it Being Discussed?** Reddit commenters frequently discuss carfentanil as a highly volatile "final frontier" in opioid use, with some discussants explicitly seeking it out while others express profound fear of accidental exposure. There is significant dialogue regarding the substance's presence in "confetti" stamps—a specific drug brand reported to contain fentanyl, carfentanil, and unidentified substances—and "Gray Death," an illicit opioid mixture that combines carfentanil with various other synthetic analogs. Discussants actively share information on the extreme difficulty of volumetric dosing, noting that even microscopic quantities can be lethal. The substance is often discussed in the context of the global supply chain, with commenters attributing its use to the availability of precursors and high-potency analogs from international laboratories. Additionally, there is frequent debate over the qualitative effects of carfentanil, with some describing a unique "nod" and others noting that its rapid onset and short duration of action lead to a cycle of frequent redosing and profound physical instability.