

## [Substance Memo] Cychlorphine Detection in Marion County, IN

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March 20, 2026

**[CORRECTED 03/24/2026]**

Cychlorphine (N-Propionitrile chlorphine) is a novel synthetic opioid that has been identified in Midwest cities including Chicago and Louisville.

### **Substance Background:**

Cychlorphine belongs to an emergent subclass of novel synthetic opioids commonly referred to as “orphine analogues” or just “orphines.” The Center for Forensic Science Research and Education (CFSRE) identified the orphine subclass as an emerging substance in 2020. Cychlorphine was first identified by CFSRE in mid-2024. In January 2026, CFRSE released a public alert regarding an increase in fatal overdoses linked to cychlorphine in states, such as Tennessee.<sup>2</sup>

### **Paraphernalia Surveillance Data in Marion County, IN:**

Cychlorphine was detected in 10 paraphernalia items from January 2025-January 2026. All 10 items also co-detected fentanyl and methamphetamine. In September 2025, it reached its highest prevalence of 1.2% among all items tested. Cychlorphine prevalence remains low among paraphernalia surveillance data.

### **Health Impacts:**

- *In vitro* testing of Cychlorphine shows it to be 10 times more potent than fentanyl.
- It remains unclear how cychlorphine affects humans as cychlorphine has never been approved for use in humans.<sup>2</sup>
- Currently it is unclear how accurate fentanyl test strips are at detecting cychlorphine and other orphines.
- Naloxone is still believed to be effective at reversing cychlorphine-related overdoses.<sup>2</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

- **Give Naloxone.** It is important to keep naloxone in hand and administer in the case of a suspected overdose. Naloxone sites can be found here <https://optin.in.gov/>
- **Utilize Fentanyl Test Strips.** Testing can assist in detecting the presence of fentanyl in drug samples. Testing strips are still encouraged, as Cychlorphine is often seen in combination with fentanyl.
- **Rescue Breaths.** Perform rescue breathing, preferably using a mouth shield.
- **Utilize the rescue position.** Lay the person on their side, bend their knee, and turn their face to the side to open airway and prevent choking. More information can be found here:

<https://harmreduction.org/issues/overdose-prevention/overview/overdose-basics/responding-to-opioid-overdose/>

- **Inform** us if you notice any unusual overdose cases or other information that should be shared with partners.

## References

1. Choi J. What to know about cychlorphine, the synthetic opioid 10 times stronger than fentanyl. The Hill. Published March 12, 2026. Accessed March 19, 2026.  
<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/5779927-potent-opioid-cychlorphine-alarm/>
2. Increase in Fatal Overdoses Linked to Novel Synthetic Opioid N-Propionitrile Chlorphine (Cychlorphine). Cfsre.org. Published January 30, 2026. Accessed March 19, 2026.  
<https://www.cfsre.org/nps-discovery/public-alerts/increase-in-fatal-overdoses-linked-to-novel-synthetic-opioid-n-propionitrile-chlorphine-cychlorphine>