



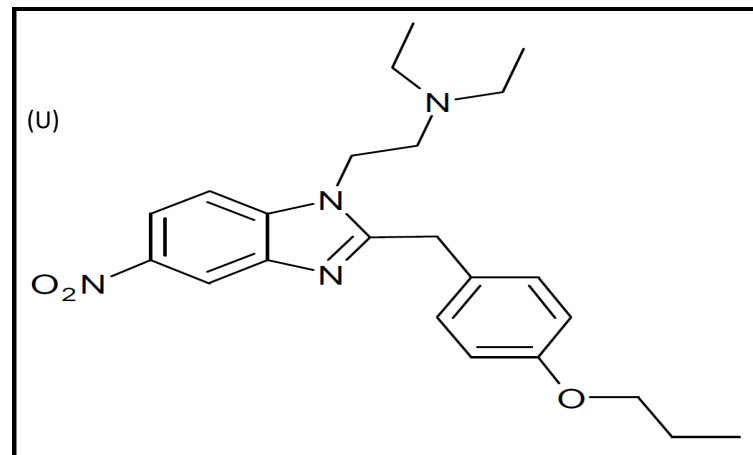
## (U) Title: New Lethal Substance, Protonitazene, Identified in Virginia

**(U) Key Points**

- (U) Protonitazene was identified in a substance seized by law enforcement in April 2022.
- (U) Protonitazene is an opioid three times more potent than fentanyl and may be resistant to overdose reversal medications such as naloxone (Narcan).

**(U) Additional Information on Protonitazene**

- (U) Protonitazene is considered a Benzimidazole-Opioid (aka Nitazene) and is not approved for medical use in the US. In January 2022, the DEA issued a temporary scheduling of this opioid as a Schedule I substance of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA).
- (U) DEA identified Protonitazene as white/beige colored and could be in powder, pill, or liquid form and has also been found in syringes.
- (U) Law enforcement across the US has encountered Protonitazene as a mixture with cutting agents such as Xylazine and caffeine or other abused substances such as fentanyl, heroin, and tramadol.
- (U) Protonitazene causes effects similar to morphine depending on varying potencies. Some side effects include: shallow/difficulty breathing, disorientation, small pupils, bluish lips/nails, and discolored tongue. For some people, it may cause rapid sedation and heart failure, leading to sudden death.



(U) Please report any information pertaining to Protonitazene to the VFC at [VFC@vfc.vsp.virginia.gov](mailto:VFC@vfc.vsp.virginia.gov).