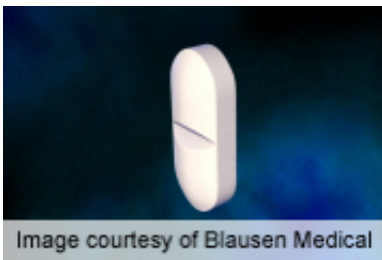


Opioids involved in most medical overdose deaths

February 21 2013



Opioid analgesics are involved in the majority of pharmaceutical-related overdose deaths, frequently involving drugs prescribed for mental health conditions, according to a research letter published in the Feb. 20 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

(HealthDay)—Opioid analgesics are involved in the majority of pharmaceutical-related overdose deaths, frequently involving drugs prescribed for mental health conditions, according to a research letter published in the Feb. 20 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Christopher M. Jones, Pharm.D., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed 2010 data from the National Vital Statistics System multiple cause-of-death file to identify pharmaceutical- and opioid-related overdose deaths in the United States and the specific drugs involved.

The researchers found that there were 38,329 [drug overdose deaths](#), of which 22,134 (57.7 percent) involved pharmaceuticals. Of the pharmaceutical-related deaths, 75.2 percent involved opioids, 29.4 percent involved benzodiazepines, 17.6 percent involved antidepressants, and 7.8 percent involved antiepileptic and anti-parkinsonism drugs. Among overdose deaths involving opioid analgesics, benzodiazepines and antidepressants were most common. Among overdose deaths involving other pharmaceuticals, opioids were frequently implicated.

"This analysis confirms the predominant role [opioid analgesics](#) play in pharmaceutical overdose deaths, either alone or in combination with other drugs," Jones and colleagues write. "It also, however, highlights the frequent involvement of drugs typically prescribed for [mental health conditions](#) such as benzodiazepines, antidepressants, and antipsychotics in overdose deaths."

More information: [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

[Health News](#) Copyright © 2013 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Opioids involved in most medical overdose deaths (2013, February 21) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-02-opioids-involved-medical-overdose-deaths.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--