

Draft study: More pilots test positive for drugs

September 9 2014, by Joan Lowy

A draft study of pilots killed in plane crashes over more than two decades shows increasing use of both legal and illegal drugs, including some that could impair flying.

The National Transportation Safety Board study released Tuesday examines toxicology reports for [pilots](#) killed in crashes from 1990 to 2012. Positive tests for at least one drug increased from 9.6 percent to 39 percent. Positive tests for two drugs rose from 2 percent to 20 percent, and three drugs from zero to 8.3 percent.

The most common drug found was an [antihistamine](#) that causes drowsiness and is a key ingredient in many over-the-counter allergy, cold and sleep medications. Pilots testing positive for [illegal drugs](#) rose from 2.3 percent to 3.8 percent, mostly due to an increase in marijuana use.

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Citation: Draft study: More pilots test positive for drugs (2014, September 9) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-09-positive-drugs.html>

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