

Any opioid use tied to involvement in criminal justice system

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(HealthDay)—Any opioid use is associated with involvement in the

criminal justice system in the past year, according to a study published online July 6 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Tyler N.A. Winkelman, M.D., from Hennepin Healthcare in Minneapolis, and colleagues used the 2015 to 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health to examine the independent correlation of intensity of opioid use with health, co-occurring substance use, and involvement in the [criminal justice](#) system. Data were included for 78,976 U.S. respondents age 18 to 64 years, representative of 196,280,447 adults.

The researchers found that, compared to individuals reporting no opioid use, those with any level of opioid use were significantly more likely to be white, have a low income, and report a chronic condition, disability, severe mental illness, or co-occurring drug use. As intensity of drug use increased, history of involvement in the criminal [justice](#) system increased (15.9, 22.4, 33.2, 51.7, and 76.8 percent, respectively, for no use, prescription opioid use, prescription opioid misuse, prescription opioid use disorder, and heroin use). Compared with no opioid use, any level of [opioid](#) use correlated with involvement in the criminal justice system in the past year in adjusted models.

"Combating the [opioid epidemic](#) will require [public health interventions](#) that involve criminal justice systems, as well as policies that reduce involvement in the criminal justice system among individuals with substance use disorders," the authors write.

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