

More than two-thirds of drug OD deaths in 2017 involved opioids

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(HealthDay)—More than two-thirds of drug overdose deaths in 2017

involved an opioid, with increases in overdose deaths from all opioids and synthetic opioids seen from 2016 to 2017, according to research published in the Dec. 21 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Lawrence Scholl, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues examined state-level changes in death rates involving [drug overdoses](#) in 50 states and the District of Columbia (DC) and those involving synthetic opioids in 20 states for 2013 to 2017. The changes in death rates during 2016 to 2017 involving opioids and opioid subcategories were also examined.

The researchers found that 67.8 percent of the 70,237 drug [overdose deaths](#) in 2017 involved an opioid. There was an increase in drug overdose death rates in 35 of 50 states and in DC from 2013 to 2017; in 15 of 20 states, significant increases in [death rates](#) involving synthetic opioids occurred, likely driven by illicitly manufactured fentanyl. Overdose deaths involving opioids and synthetic opioids increased from 2016 to 2017; deaths involving prescription opioids and heroin remained stable.

"Through 2017, the drug overdose epidemic continues to worsen and evolve, and the involvement of many types of drugs (e.g., opioids, cocaine, and methamphetamine) underscores the urgency to obtain more timely and local data to inform [public health](#) and public safety action," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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