

## Deaths from alcohol, drugs, suicide topped 150,000 in 2018

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(HealthDay)—In 2018, opioid overdose deaths declined, but deaths

involving alcohol, suicide, synthetic opioids, and other psychostimulants rose, according to a brief released May 21 by the Trust for America's Health and the Well Being Trust.

Authors of the brief, the latest in the *Pain in the Nation* series, analyzed National Center for Health Statistics Multiple Cause of Death Files (1999 to 2018). International Classification of Diseases-10 codes were used to determine the underlying causes of death.

According to the brief, in 2018, more than 150,000 Americans died from alcohol, drugs, and suicide combined, with a death rate of 46.4 deaths per 100,000, virtually unchanged from 46.6 in 2017. Reductions in overdoses involving prescription opioids and, to a lesser extent, heroin-related overdose deaths drove the decline in drug-induced deaths. However, there was a rise in alcohol-induced deaths and suicide deaths—4 percent higher than in 2017. Alcohol death rates were highest among American Indians, adults ages 55 to 74 years, men, and those living in the West or [rural areas](#). Suicide deaths occurred in 48,344 Americans in 2018, a 2 percent increase compared with 2017 and 25 percent higher than 2008. Men, those living in rural areas, and American Indians/Alaska Natives had the highest rates of death by suicide.

"The reduction in certain opioid deaths suggests that the policies and programs targeting the opioid epidemic may be taking hold in some populations—but progress is uneven and many racial and [ethnic groups](#) are not seeing the same success as whites," the authors write. "The nation should build on this small positive step and bring the same focus to the wider issue of drug overdoses and to the populations who are at increasing risk, especially blacks, Latinos, and American Indians."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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