

CDC reports record high 12-month drug overdose death toll

October 14 2021



(HealthDay)—Drug overdose deaths in the United States hit a new

record for the 12-month period ending March 2021, new government data shows.

A record high 96,779 [drug overdose deaths](#) occurred between March 2020 and March 2021, representing a 29.6% rise, new statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics found. The numbers are provisional, and the CDC's estimate for predicted deaths totals more than 99,000 from March 2020 to March 2021, *CNN* reported.

"It is important to remember that behind these devastating numbers are families, friends, and [community members](#) who are grieving the loss of loved ones," Regina LaBelle, acting director of the Executive Office of the President Office of National Drug Control Policy, said in a statement, *CNN* reported

The state with the largest increase in overdose deaths (85.1%) during that time was Vermont. Opioids accounted for the highest number of overdose deaths, followed by synthetic opioids, excluding methadone, which was linked to the lowest number of overdose deaths.

Three states saw their number of overdose deaths decline from March 2020 to March 2021: New Hampshire, New Jersey and South Dakota. South Dakota's reported overdose deaths declined by 16.3%, the highest of any state.

Between March 2020 and March 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in the United States and disrupted normal daily routines, *CNN* noted.

The CDC data also show a 29.7% increase in drug overdose deaths between February 2020 and February 2021.

Earlier this year, the CDC said the more than 93,000 drug [overdose deaths](#) already reported in 2020 was nearly 30% more than the [number](#) observed in 2019, and the largest single-year increase ever in the United States, *CNN* reported.

At the time, National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Dr. Nora Volkow called the figure "chilling" and said the COVID-19 pandemic has "created a devastating collision of health crises in America."

More information: Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on [drug overdose deaths](#).

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Citation: CDC reports record high 12-month drug overdose death toll (2021, October 14) retrieved 16 August 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-10-cdc-high-month-drug-overdose.html>

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