

# Emergency medical services encounters for opioid-involved OD rates up 2018 to 2022

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From January 2018 to March 2022, there was an increase in emergency

medical services (EMS) encounters for nonfatal opioid-involved overdose, with increases for both sexes and most age groups, according to research published in the Aug. 26 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Shannon M. Casillas, M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues used data from biospatial Inc. to describe trends in EMS encounters per 10,000 total EMS encounters by selected characteristics during January 2018 to March 2022 in 491 counties from 21 states.

The researchers found that the nonfatal opioid-involved overdose rate increased during the study period by 4.0 percent quarterly, on average. For both sexes and most [age groups](#), the rates increased. The highest rates were seen among non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander persons; the largest increases were seen among non-Hispanic Black followed by Hispanic or Latino persons. In both urban and rural counties and for all quartiles of county-level characteristics, the rates increased, except in counties with the lowest percentage of uninsured persons. The highest rates and largest rate increases were seen in [urban counties](#) and counties with higher rates of unemployment.

"These data can guide public health efforts to ensure implementation of equitable prevention and response initiatives; for example, counties with higher unemployment rates might benefit from increased access to harm reduction services (e.g., naloxone and fentanyl test strip distribution), treatment (e.g., medications for [opioid use disorder](#)), and behavioral health services," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to biospatial Inc.

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

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