

2000 to 2020 saw increase in drug overdose death rates in seniors

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From 2000 to 2020, there was an increase in the age-adjusted rates of

drug overdose deaths for adults aged 65 years and older, according to a November data brief published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics.

Ellen A. Kramarow, Ph.D., and Betzaida Tejada-Vera, from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, present age-adjusted trends in drug overdose death rates for adults aged 65 years and older for 2000 to 2020 using data from the National Vital Statistics System.

The researchers found that the age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths for adults aged 65 years and older increased from 2.4 to 8.8 per 100,000 standard population between 2000 and 2020. The rates of drug overdose deaths were higher among non-Hispanic Blacks versus Hispanic and non-Hispanic Whites in men aged 65 to 74 years and 75 years and older.

Drug overdose death rates for [women](#) aged 65 to 74 years were higher for non-Hispanic Black women versus Hispanic and non-Hispanic White women; for women aged 75 years and older, the highest rates were seen for non-Hispanic Whites. For adults aged 65 years and older, there was a 53 percent increase in the age-adjusted rate of drug overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids other than methadone between 2019 and 2020 (from 1.9 to 2.9).

"Between 2000 and 2020, age-adjusted death rates for [adults](#) aged 65 and over increased from 2.7 deaths per 100,000 standard population to 12.3 for men and from 2.3 to 5.8 for women," the authors write.

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