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# Characteristics of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths in Oregon, 2020

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# Drug overdoses are a serious public health problem

- More than 250 lives lost to drugs in the U.S. and more than two Oregonians died from drug overdose every day in 2020.
- Drug overdose deaths were more than double in the past 10 years, from 2019 to 2020, increase by 30 percent.
- Oregon overdose death rates remained lower than the national average since 2012 and was 35.5 percent lower than the national average rate (21.6 vs 13.9) in 2019.
- Recent increasing overdose death trends in Oregon are disturbing.

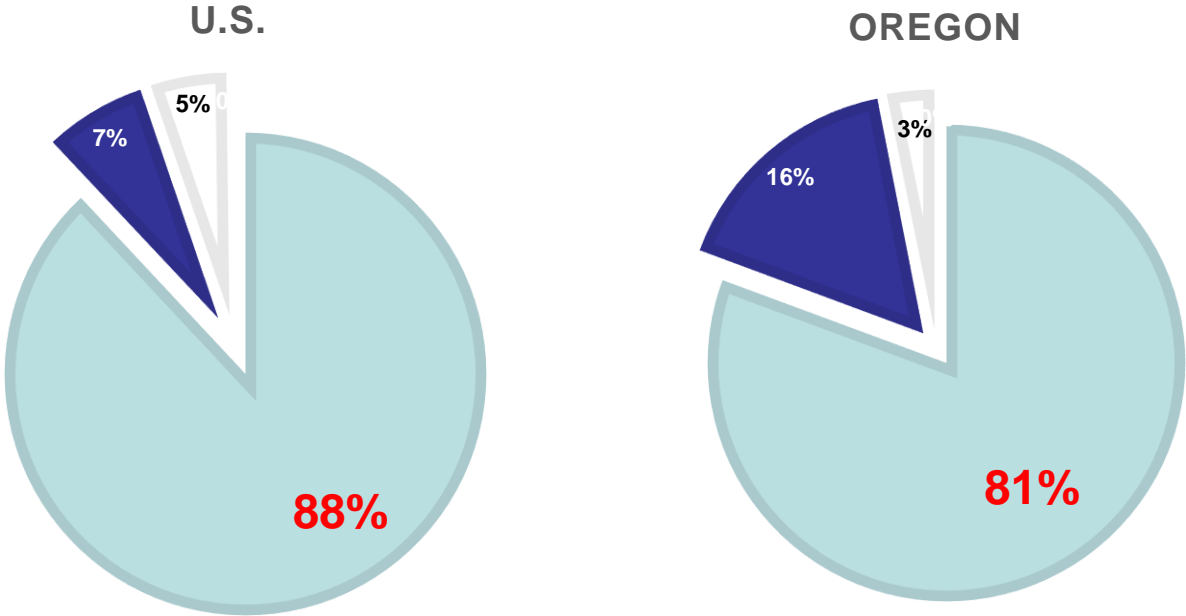
Source: NCHS and WISQARS

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# Most drug overdose deaths are unintentional

## Drug overdose deaths by intent, U.S. vs. Oregon, 2019

■ Unintentional ■ Suicide ■ Undetermined ■ Homicide/Legal intervention

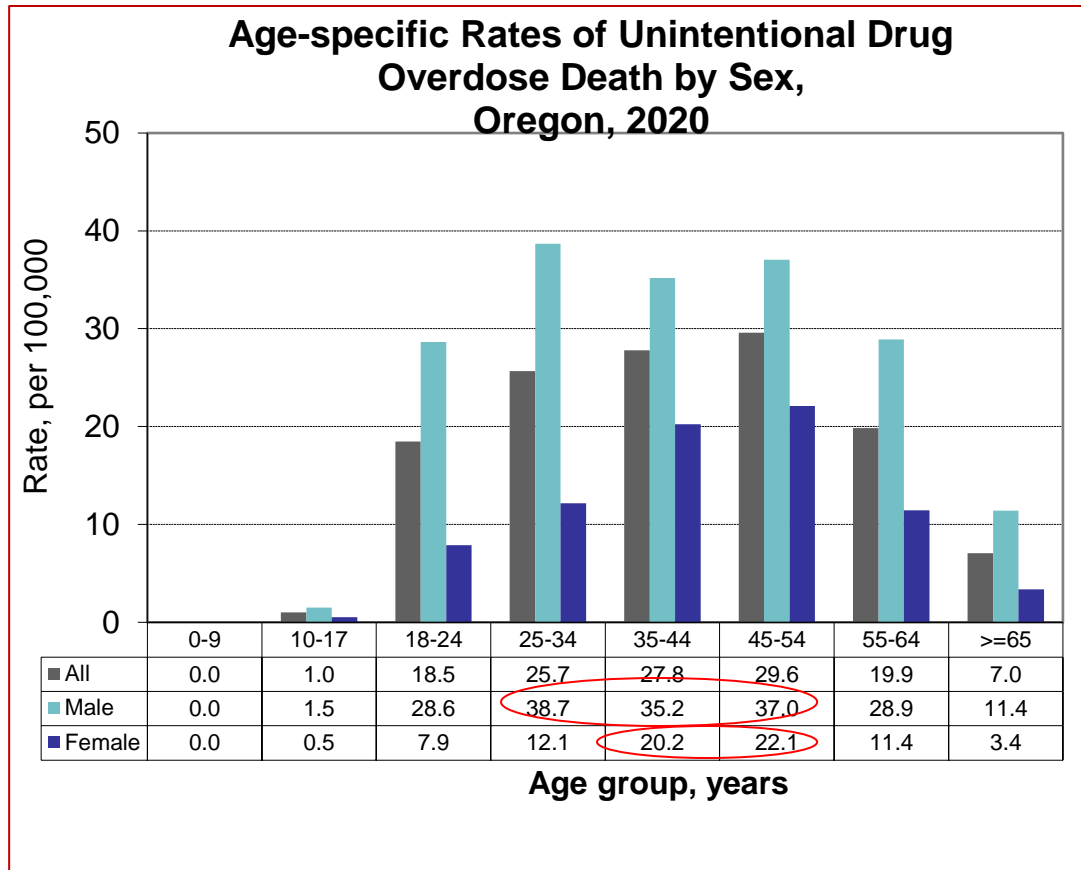


Source: WISQARS

# Demographic of decedents of unintentional drug overdose

## People at higher risk

- Middle-aged persons (42.8 ± 14.2 years)
- Males aged 25 to 54 had the highest rate.
- Among females, ages 35-54 had the highest rate.

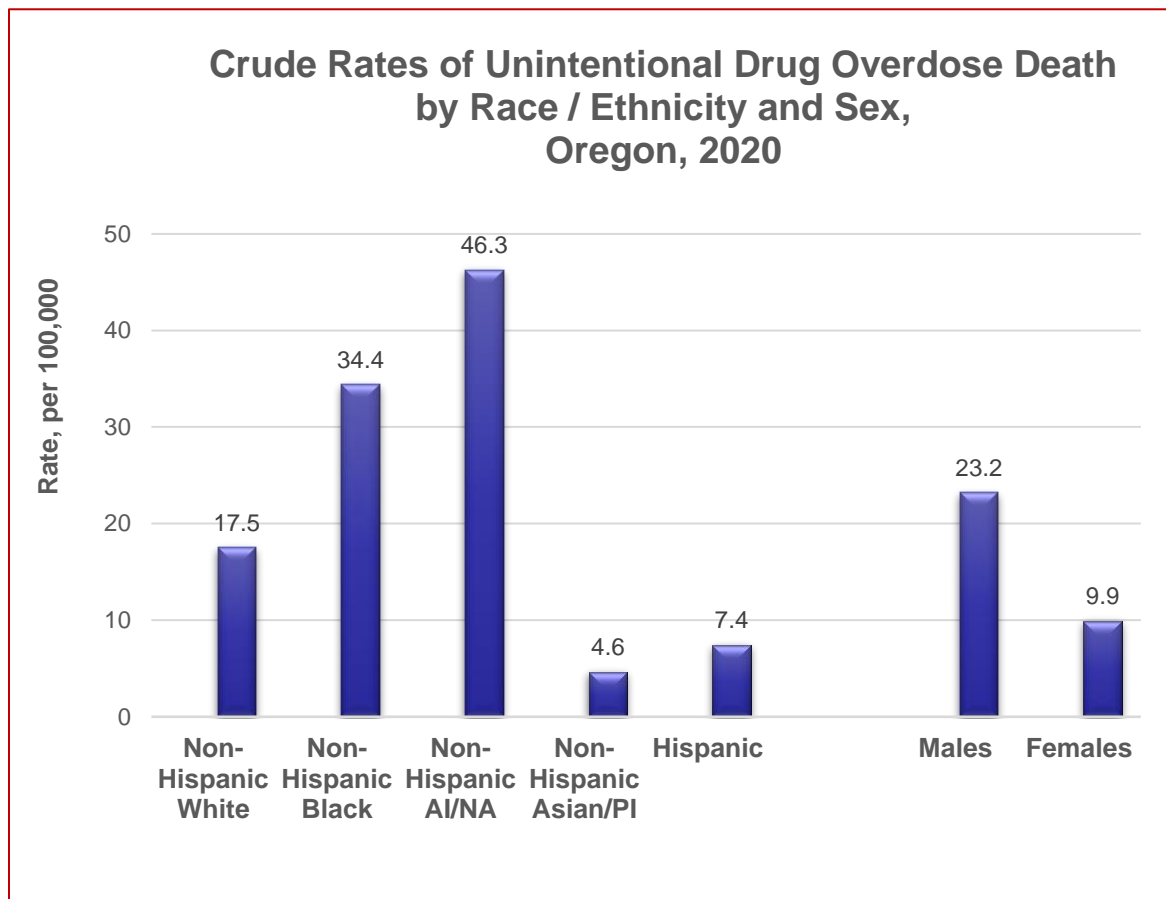


Source: SUDORS & NCHS

# Demographic of decedents of unintentional drug overdose

## People at higher risk

- Non-Hispanic American Indians/Native Alaskans
- Non-Hispanic African Americans
- Males were 2.3X than females likely to die of OD
- Experiencing homelessness (13% were homeless)



Source: SUDORS & NCHS

# Mental illnesses and substance use problems are prevalent and not treated

## Mental health and Substance Use/Misuse among Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths, Oregon, 2020

Mental health, substance abuse history and treatment	Count	% of total deaths
<b>Type of drug poisoning</b>		
Overdose related to substance abuse	675	97.0
Wrong dosage/overmedication	15	2.2
Unknown	6	0.9
<b>Metal Health, Alcohol and Substance Use Problems</b>		
Diagnosed mental illness	212	30.5
Alcohol use problem	128	18.4
Non-alcohol related substance use problem	681	97.8
Current treatment for mental and substance use problems	63	9.1
<b>Treatment for substance abuse</b>		
No treatment	624	89.7
No current treatment, but treated in the past	53	7.6
Current treatment	19	2.7
<b>Naloxone administered among opioid involved deaths</b>		
Yes	56	11.5
No	342	70.4
Unknown	86	17.7

Source: SUDORS

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# Drugs involved/caused deaths

Among 696 unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2020,

- 49.3% (n=343) due to a single drug overdose
- 28.6% (n=199) due to two drugs
- 22.1% (n=154) due to three or more drugs
  
- 46.8% (n=326) related to toxicity of methamphetamine
- 32.0% (n=223) related to toxicity of fentanyl
- 27.9% (n=194) related to toxicity of heroin
- 8.6% (n=60) related to toxicity of cocaine
- 10.3% (n=72) related to toxicity of alcohol

Source: SUDORS

# Methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl used alone (304 deaths, 43.7% of total deaths) or in combination with other drugs (281 deaths, 40.4% of total deaths) claimed a total of 585 deaths (84.1% of total deaths)

## Common drugs involved unintentional overdose deaths, 2020

Drug Name	How to involve	Number of Deaths	%, among the drug involved	%, total overdose deaths
Fentanyl (N=223)	Alone	102	45.7	14.7
	In combination*	121	54.3	17.4
	Fentanyl + Cocaine	31	13.9	4.5
	Fentanyl + Methamphetamine	43	19.3	6.2
	Fentanyl + Alcohol	20	9.0	2.9
	Fentanyl + Heroin	17	7.6	2.4
Heroin (N=194)	Alone	53	27.3	7.6
	In combination*	141	72.7	20.3
	Heroin + Methamphetamine	107	55.2	15.4
Methamphetamine (N=326)	Alone	149	45.7	21.4
	In combination*	177	54.3	25.4
	Methamphetamine + Heroin	107	32.8	15.4
Fentanyl, Heroin, Methamphetamine (N=281)	In combination, involved at least one of fentanyl, heroin and methamphetamine	281	NA	40.4
Pharmaceutical Opioids including such as Hydrocodone, Methadone, Morphine, and Oxycodone (N=93)	Alone	19	20.4	2.7
	In combination*	74	79.6	10.6
	One of pharmaceutical opioids + one or more of fentanyl, heroin and methamphetamine	55	59.1	7.9

Note: \* When more than two drugs are attributed to a death, e.g. a death due to toxicity of fentanyl, heroin and methamphetamine, the combinations can be counted as in combination of fentanyl + heroin, and fentanyl + methamphetamine. Similarly, in combination of pharmaceutical opioids and non-pharmaceutical opioids or methamphetamine may duplicate under different drugs. Those will result in the total sum > 100% for some drugs. Be cautious when counting the specific drug overdose deaths involved multiple drugs based on the numbers in the table.

Source: SUDORS

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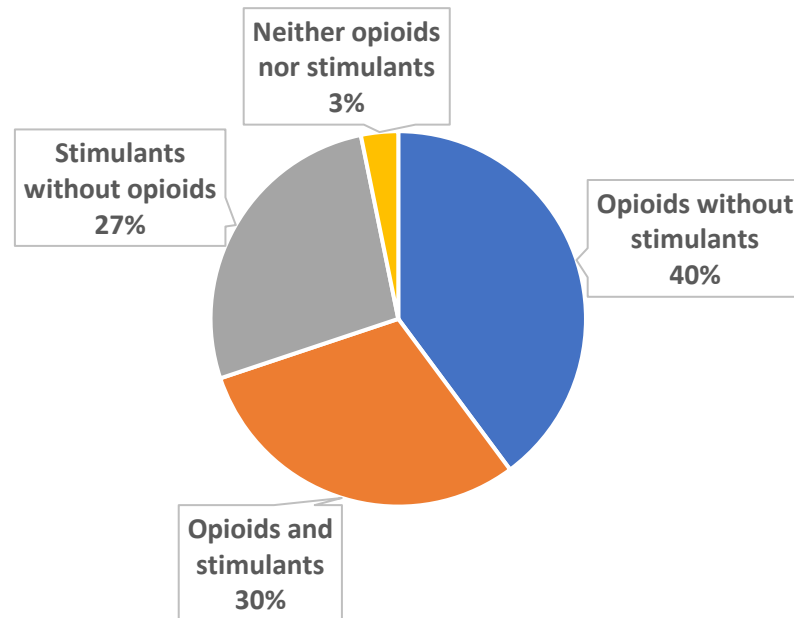
# Nearly 96.7 percent of unintentional drug overdose deaths were caused by opioids and/or stimulants

Opioids were related to 69.8% of the deaths

Stimulants (such as methamphetamine, amphetamine, cocaine, and MDMA) were related to 56.9% of the deaths

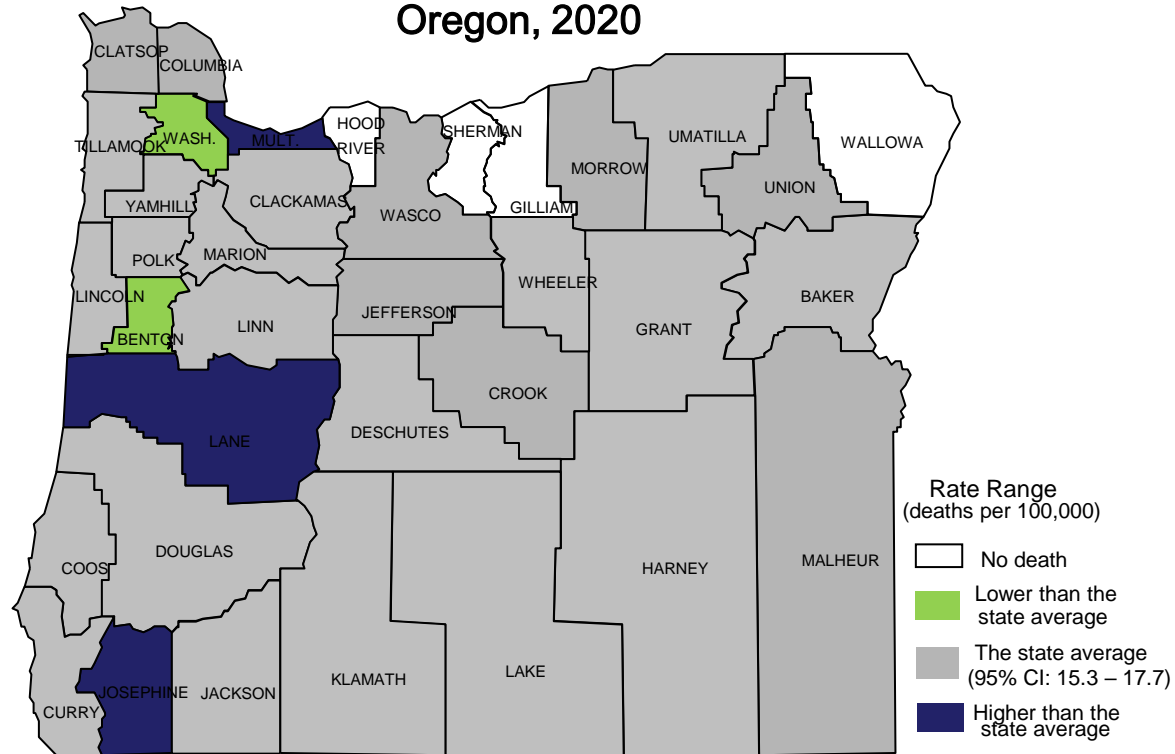
Source: SUDORS

Unintentional drug overdose deaths by drug category, Oregon, 2020



Majority unintentional fatal overdose incidents (503 incidents, 72% of total deaths) occurred in six counties: Multnomah, Lane, Marion, Clackamas, Washington, and Jackson

### Unintentional Drug Overdose Death Rates by Injury County, Oregon, 2020



# Conclusion

Drug overdoses are a serious public health problem in the United States including Oregon. This problem is complex and multi-faceted. The approach must be implemented across public health, health care systems, law enforcement, local organizations, and community awareness/response sectors.

# Acknowledgements

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**THANK YOU**

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