

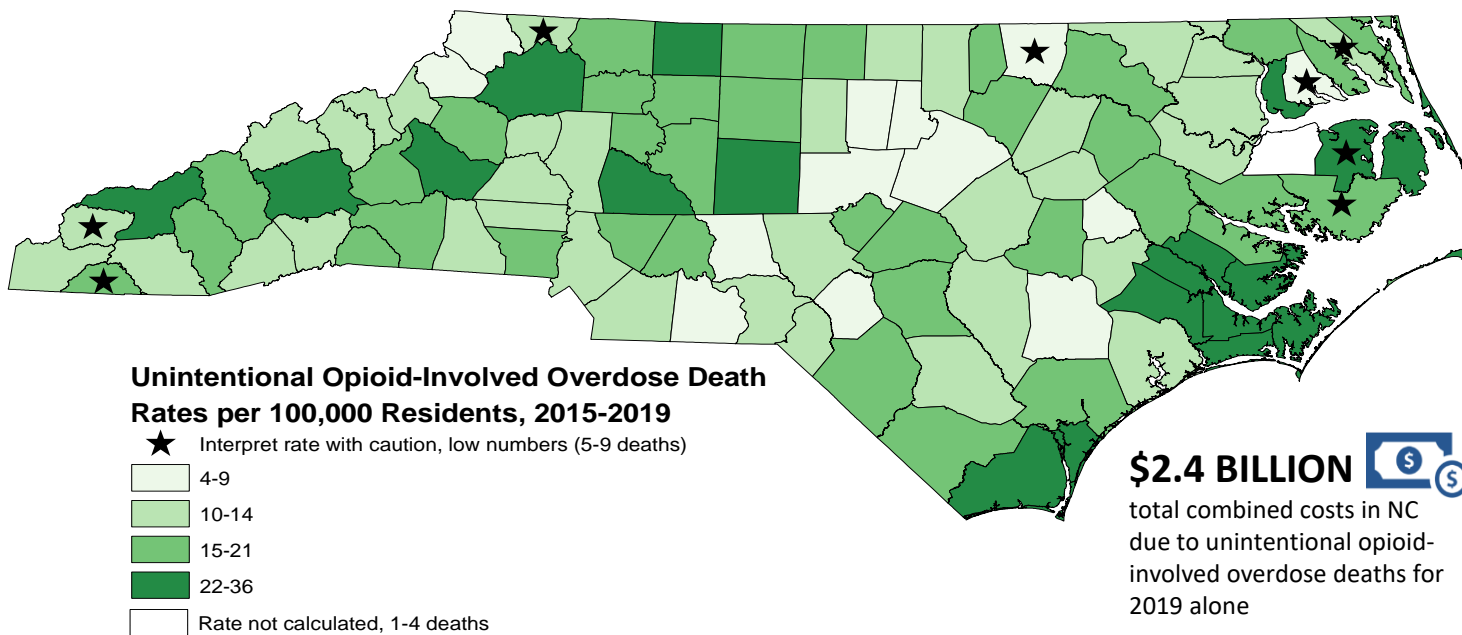


Opioid-Involved Overdoses, 2019

From 2000 to 2019, more than 16,500 North Carolinians died from unintentional opioid-involved overdose deaths. Opioid-involved overdoses have steadily increased, and while there was a decrease in overdose deaths and emergency department (ED) visits in 2018, these overdoses are on the rise again as of 2019. Historically, commonly prescribed pain medications (i.e. oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine) were the leading cause of opioid-involved overdose. However, heroin, fentanyl, and fentanyl analogues^ now contribute to the majority of opioid-involved overdoses. Opioid-involved overdoses are common in both urban and rural areas, and affect a wide range of demographics. Most commonly affected people tend to be White or American Indian, male, and ages 25 to 54 years old.

^Fentanyl analogues are drugs that are similar to fentanyl but have been chemically modified in order to bypass current drug laws.

Unintentional Opioid-Involved Overdose Death Rates by County, N.C. Residents, 2015-2019



\$2.4 BILLION total combined costs in NC due to unintentional opioid-involved overdose deaths for 2019 alone

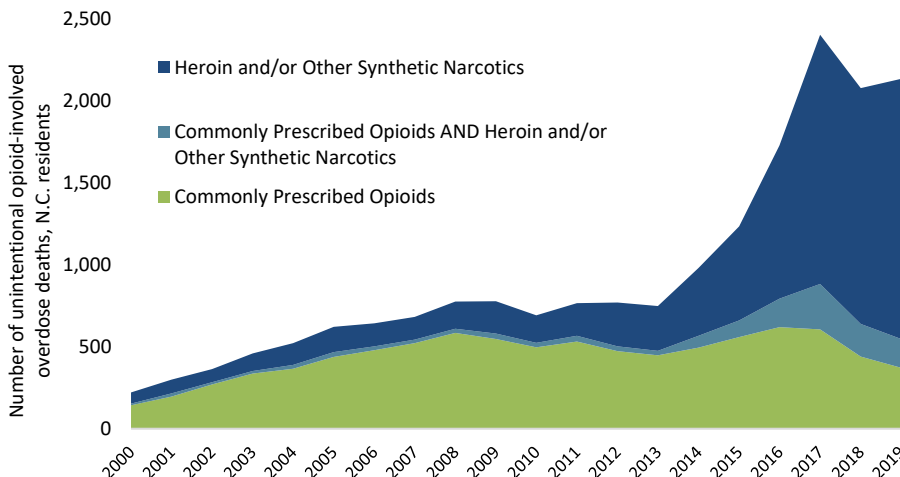
Deaths: N.C. State Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics-Deaths, 2015-2019, unintentional medication/drug overdose (X40-X44) with specific T-codes (T40.0-T40.4, T40.6) for opioids; Population: National Center for Health Statistics 2015-2019; Economic impact: CDC WISQARS for unintentional opioid-drug related poisonings, Cost of Injury Reports, National Center for Injury and Control, CDC. 2017 costs indexed to state 2019 prices for poisoning deaths.

Unintentional Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths by Opioid Type, N.C. Residents, 2000-2019

From 2010 to 2017 there was an increase in overdose deaths involving illicit opioids, including heroin and/or other synthetic narcotics.

Although there was a decrease in illicit opioid-involved overdose deaths in 2018, these deaths **increased by 5%** in 2019.

In 2019, illicit opioids were involved in approximately **89%** of unintentional opioid-involved overdose deaths.



Deaths: N.C. State Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics-Deaths, 2000-2019, unintentional medication/drug overdose (X40-X44), Heroin and/or Other Synthetic Narcotics: T40.1, T40.4; Commonly prescribed opioids: T40.2, T40.3; This graph does not include cases with only T40.0 (Opium) or only T40.6 (Other and unspecified narcotics);

Note: Commonly prescribed opioids include medications like oxycodone, hydrocodone and codeine. Other synthetic narcotics may represent both prescription synthetic opioids and non-pharmaceutical synthetic opioids because synthetic opioids produced illicitly (e.g., non-pharmaceutical fentanyl) are not identified separately from prescription ('pharmaceutical') synthetic opioids in ICD-10 death certificate codes.

Unintentional Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths by Selected Demographics, N.C. Residents, 2015-2019

	Number	Percent	Rate
Sex			
Female	2,589	32.9%	9.8
Male	5,285	67.1%	21.2
Race			
Hispanic	190	2.4%	3.9
White*	6,618	84.3%	20.1
Black*	862	11.0%	7.6
American Indian*	118	1.5%	19.3
Asian/Pacific Islander*	26	0.3%	1.6
Other*	32	0.4%	--
Age Group			
0-14	9	0.1%	0.1 [^]
15-24	780	9.9%	11.3
25-34	2,456	31.2%	36.0
35-44	2,013	25.6%	31.1
45-54	1,627	20.7%	23.6
55-64	864	11.0%	13.1
65-84	120	1.5%	1.7
85+	5	0.1%	0.5 [^]

Males have over twice the unintentional opioid-involved overdose death rate compared to females (21.2 compared to 9.8 per 100,000, respectively).

Whites* have the highest unintentional opioid-involved overdose death rate, at 20.1 per 100,000, followed closely by **American Indians*** at 19.3 per 100,000.

Unintentional opioid-involved overdose death rates are highest among adults ages **25-54**, and tend to be lowest among those **0-14** and **65+**.

**Non-Hispanic; *Other* includes other and multiple races, and unknown (population value not available, rate not calculated)*

***Rates not reported for <5 deaths*

[^]Rates unstable for 5-9 deaths; interpret with caution

Rates are per 100,000 NC residents

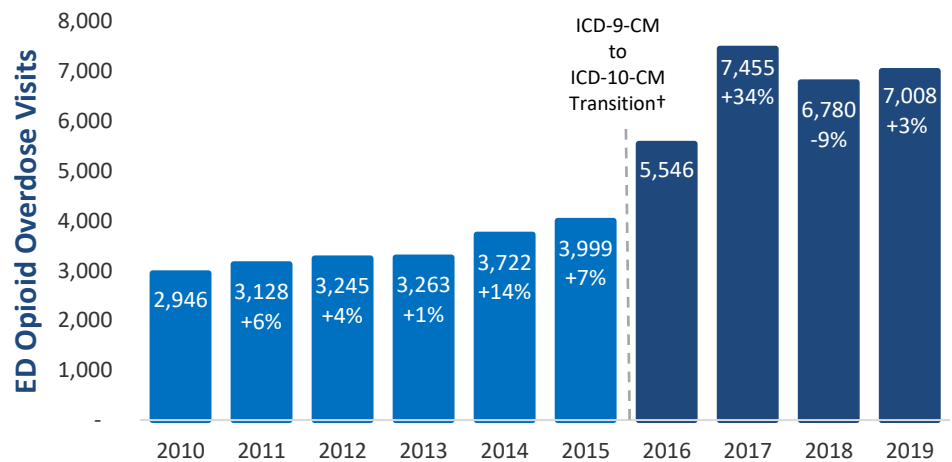
Source: N.C. State Center for Health Statistics, 2015-2019, unintentional medication/drug overdose (X40-X44), Heroin and/or Other Synthetic Narcotics: T40.1,T40.4; Commonly Prescribed Opioids: T40.2,T40.3; Opium: T40.0; Other Unspecified Narcotics: T40.6

Emergency Department (ED) Opioid Overdose Visits by Year, N.C. Residents, 2010-2019

Opioid overdose ED visits include cases of an opioid overdose by any intent (unintentional, intentional, and undetermined) for North Carolina residents.

From 2010 to 2019, there was a nearly **140% increase** in opioid overdose ED visits. 7,008 in 2019 compared to 2,946 in 2010.

North Carolina experienced a **3% increase** in opioid overdose ED visits from 2018 to 2019.



Source: NC DETECT (statewide ED data), N.C. Division of Public Health & Carolina Center for Health Informatics, UNC Department of Emergency Medicine (UNC DEM), 2010-2019

[†]ICD-9-CM transitioned to ICD-10-CM in 2015 and the impact on surveillance is unclear, use caution when interpreting trends.

Additional Resources for Addressing Overdose in North Carolina

[North Carolina's Opioid Action Plan 2.0 \(OAP\)](#)

The OAP was developed with community partners to combat the opioid crisis and will be continuously updated as we make progress on the epidemic.

[North Carolina Opioid Action Plan Dashboard 2.0](#)

Track and monitor the N.C. Opioid Action Plan data metrics; includes data for the state as well as local counties.

[North Carolina Safer Syringe Initiative](#)

List of where to find your local syringe service program, including hours of operation and counties served.

[Naloxone in North Carolina](#)

Provides general information and where to locate naloxone in your community.



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Public Health

Injury Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit / 919-707-5425 / www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov / The N.C. Injury and Violence Prevention Branch is supported by Cooperative Agreement NU17CE925024-01-01 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) /

N.C. Division of Public Health / www.ncpublichealth.com / State of North Carolina / Department of Health and Human Services / www.ncdhhs.gov / N.C. DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.