Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths in Connecticut

Increased From 2012 to 2020

The use of illicit drugs and misuse of prescription opioids were the main cause of drug overdose deaths in Connecticut, resulting in a total of 7,695 deaths from 2012 to 2020. There was a gradual, but significant, increase in the number of deaths from 2012 (N=357) to 2020 (N=1,374).

What we know about overdose deaths in 2020:

- Overdose deaths increased by 14.3% in 2020 compared to 2019.
- Xylazine, an animal tranquilizer found with fentanyl, was in 140 (10%) deaths compared to 70 (6%) in 2019.
- The non-Hispanic Black population had the highest rate of mortality by race and ethnicity.
- 93% of deaths involved an opioid (e.g. fentanyl, heroin, or prescription opioid pain reliever).
- 85% of deaths involved fentanyl as the cause of death.

KEY POINTS:

- 1,374 drug overdose deaths in 2020.
- There was a significant increase in deaths from 2012 to 2020 (285%).
- 53.1% of deaths occurred at a residence, their own or elsewhere.
- Males (57.7 per 100,000 population) had a higher mortality rate than females (18.4) in 2020.
- Mortality rate was highest for non-Hispanic Black males, 25-54 yrs. old.
- 85% of deaths involved fentanyl, a 3% increase from 2019.
- Amphetamine/methamphetamine (14%), methadone (16%), and cocaine (38%) - involved deaths increased in 2020.

Data Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
How to prevent drug overdose deaths:

- Create awareness in communities by providing education on the use of opioids and harm reduction choices.
- Learn about naloxone, the lifesaving drug that reverses opioid overdoses. Visit: www.norasaves.com
- Share options for safe disposal of unused medications and the site of local drug collection boxes.
- Maximize use of prescription monitoring programs where physicians register and monitor the prescriptions they write for patients.
- Enhance and promote Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) programs.
- For further information visit: www.drugfreect.org; www.ct.gov/dph/injuryprevention

Contact Information:
Injury and Violence Surveillance Unit, Connecticut Department of Public Health, Phone: 860-509-8251

Data Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Percentage of Deaths

- Any Opioid: 93%
- Fentanyl: 85%
- Cocaine: 39%
- Opioid/Benzos: 21%
- Heroin: 19%
- Xylazine/Fentanyl: 10%

Individuals Ages 35-44 Years had the Highest Drug Overdose Mortality Rate by Age, Connecticut, 2020

- Age in Years: <25, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+
- Mortality Rate/100,000: 7.6, 68.1, 81.7, 62.5, 53.9, 9.8

Non-Hispanic Black Population had the Highest Mortality Rate, Connecticut, 2020

- Rate/100,000: 39.5, 51.9, 36.2
- Non-Hispanic White: 39.5
- Non-Hispanic Black: 51.9
- Hispanic: 36.2

Most Overdose Deaths Occurred at Home, Connecticut, 2020

- Location of Death: Home, Hospital, Other
- Percentage of Deaths: 53.1%, 26.3%, 20.7%

Percentage of Deaths Location of Death

- Home: 53.1%
- Hospital: 26.3%
- Other: 20.7%