



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Fatal Unintentional Drug Overdose Report

Quick Overview of Drug Overdose Decedents, 2019 - July 2020*

- As of the middle of July 2020, there were 666 confirmed drug overdose deaths for the year; however, this number may change because there are 336 pending cases waiting for toxicology confirmation.
- In 2019, there were 1,200 unintentional drug overdose related deaths.
- The percentage of fentanyl-involved drug overdose deaths continues to be high in 2020.
- New and emerging lethal combinations of xylazine (animal tranquilizer) with fentanyl were identified in 2019 and the same combination continues to be present in 2020 drug overdose deaths also.

Monthly Overview of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths (2019 – June 2020*)

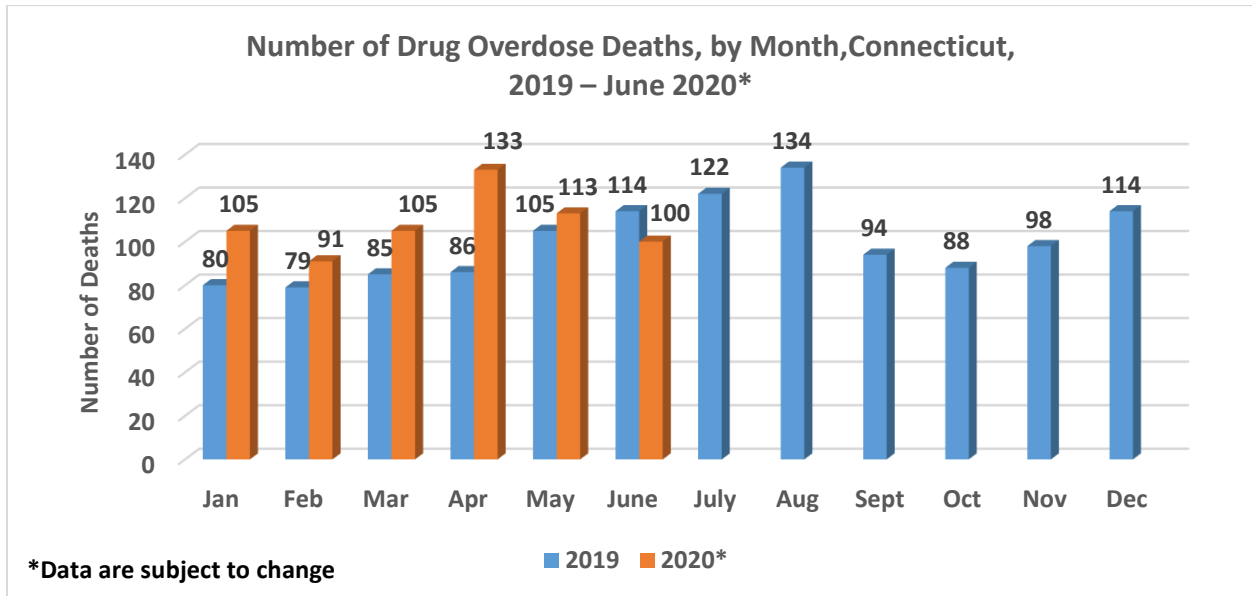
January 1 – July 2020*	2019
As of the middle of July 2020, there were 666 confirmed drug overdose deaths and 336 pending cases.	There were 1,200 unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2019, with an increase of 18% compared to 2018.
The lethal combination of xylazine and fentanyl continues to be a problem in 2020. As of the middle of July, there were 76 deaths with xylazine and fentanyl combined. The median number of xylazine-involved deaths was 11.5.	For the first time in 2019, an animal tranquilizer xylazine in combination with fentanyl was involved in 70 drug overdose deaths. The median number for xylazine-involved deaths was 7.
Fentanyl continues to be a problem in 2020. The average percentage of fentanyl-involved deaths was at 86.6% as of June 2020.	On average, fentanyl and/or fentanyl analogs were involved in 82% of the overdose deaths in 2019.
Updated on 8-12-2020; Data Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), Connecticut; *Numbers and percentages are subject to change for 2020 data	

For substance use disorder information visit: <https://www.drugfreect.org/>

For information on the CT DPH Opioids and Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention Program in the Office of Injury and Violence Prevention, visit: <https://www.ct.gov/dph/injuryprevention>

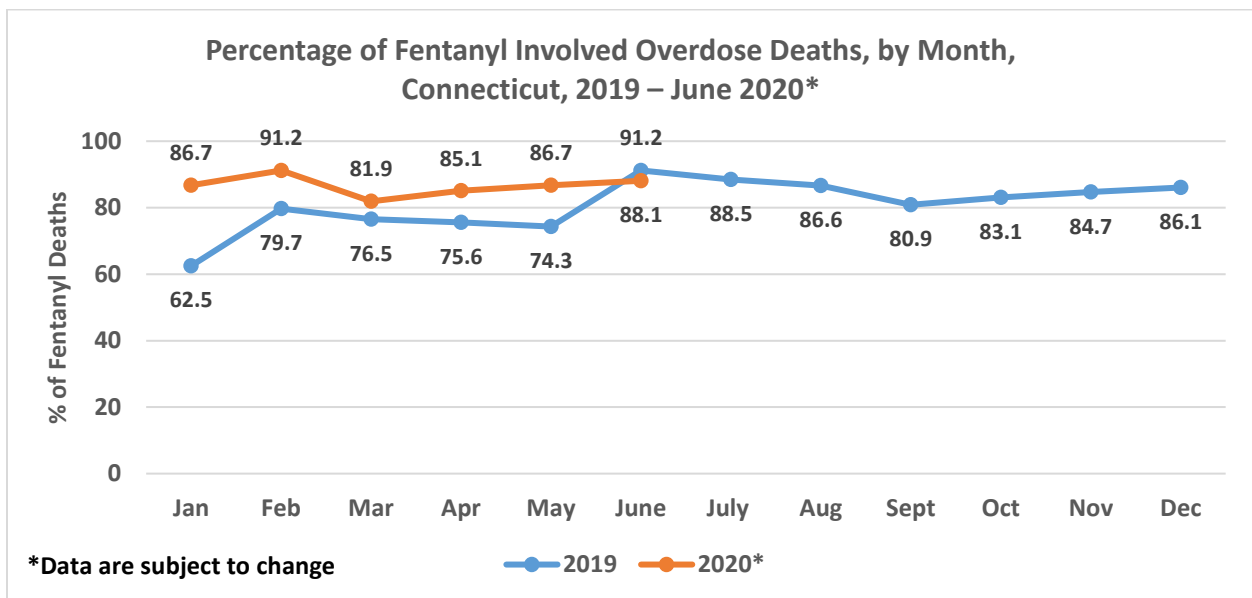
Unintentional drug overdose deaths, by month, Connecticut, 2019 – June 2020*:

As of the middle of July 2020, there were 666 confirmed drug overdose deaths and 336 pending cases. In 2019, 1,200 people died from an unintentional drug overdose in Connecticut, an increase of 18% compared to 2018. The chart below represents the monthly count of confirmed drug overdose deaths.



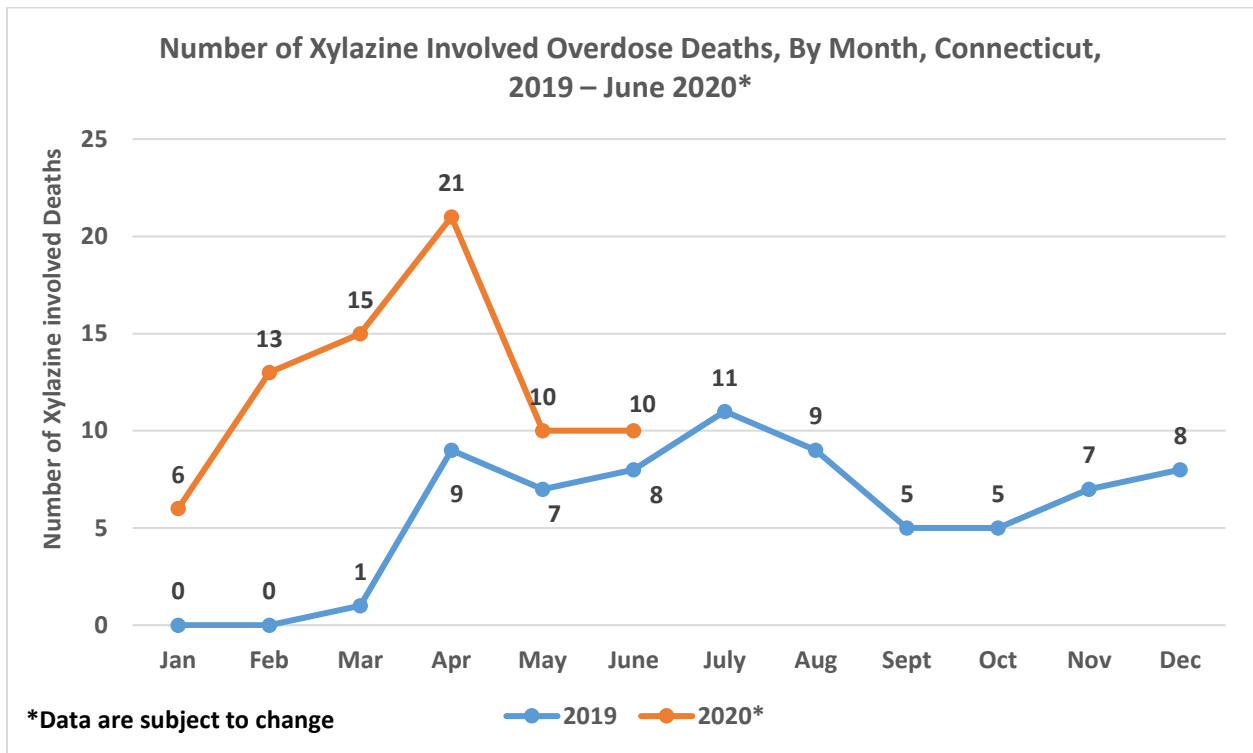
The percentage of fentanyl-involved overdose deaths continues to be a problem in 2020*:

Fentanyl-involved overdose deaths increased significantly in 2019 to 82%, compared to previous years. As of middle of July 2020, the average percentage of fentanyl-involved deaths was at 86.6%. The chart below represents the percentage of fentanyl-involved deaths by month.



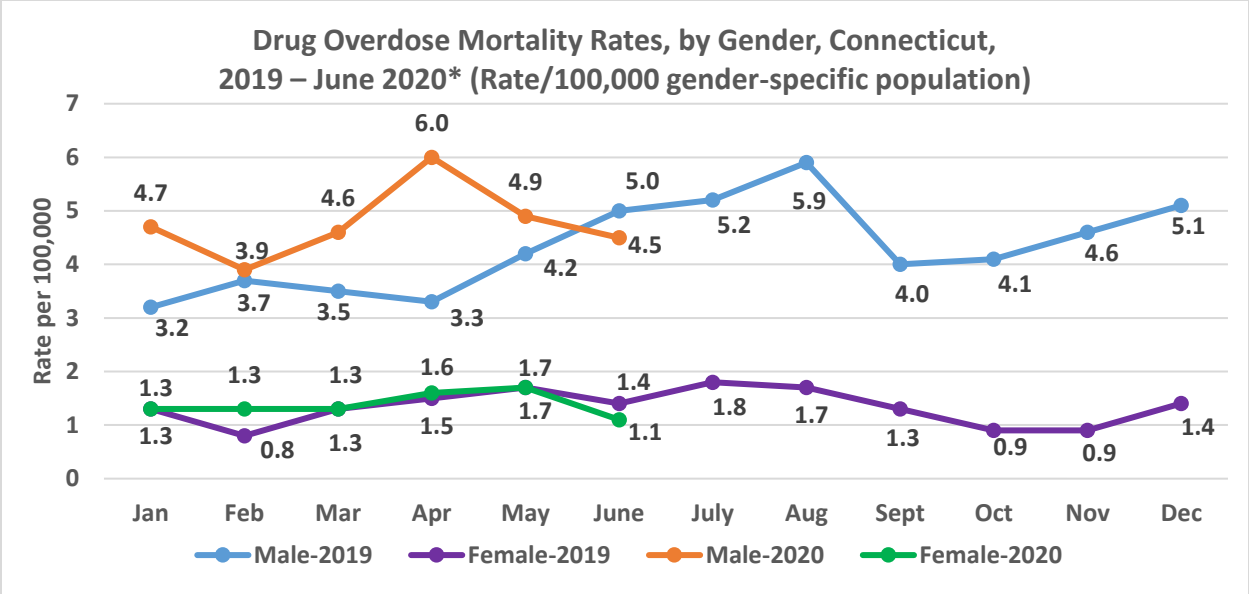
Xylazine, a veterinary tranquilizer, identified as an emerging novel substance in drug intoxication deaths in Connecticut since March 2019 – June 2020*:

To enhance drug effects, recreational drugs are often adulterated with other pharmacological agents such as levamisole and xylazine. Xylazine is a veterinary sedative not intended for human use. For the first time in Connecticut, beginning in March 2019, xylazine was identified as a novel and emerging adulterant in fatal drug intoxications when combined with fentanyl and continues to be a problem in 2020 also. In 2019, there were 70 xylazine-involved deaths, and as of the middle of July 2020, there have been 76. Except for one (xylazine + cocaine), all xylazine-involved deaths were combined with fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 100 times more potent than morphine. The below chart represents the number of xylazine-involved deaths by month.



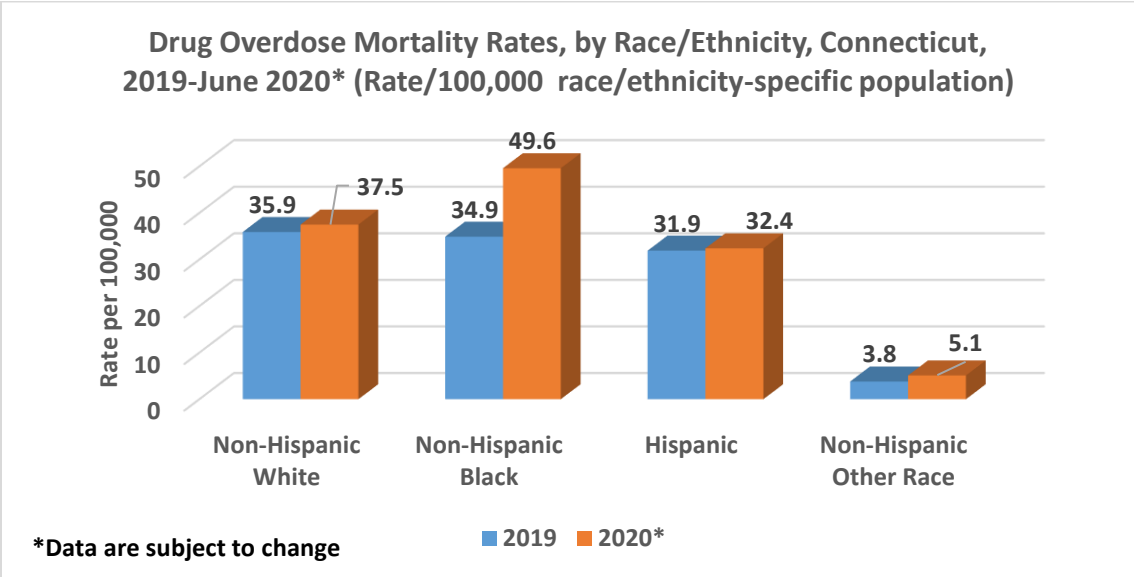
Drug overdose death rates were higher in males compared to females in 2019 –

June 2020*: Throughout 2019 to June 2020*, rates of unintentional drug overdose-related death were consistently higher among males when compared to females, in Connecticut. The line graph below represents rates of unintentional drug overdose death by gender (rate per 100,000 gender-specific population) from 2019 – June 2020*.



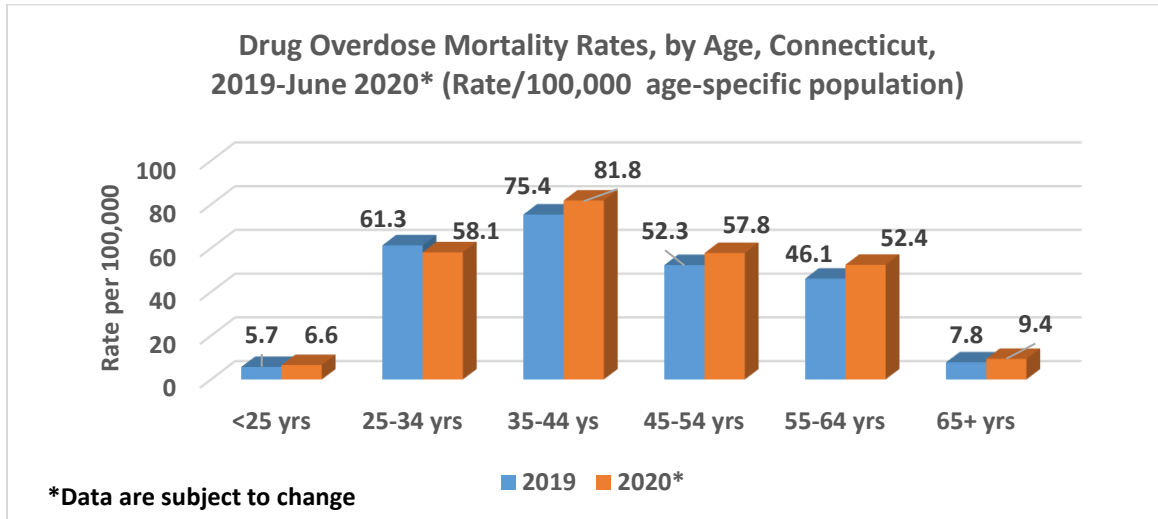
Drug overdose death rates were higher among the non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black populations compared to the Hispanic population in Connecticut, 2019 – June 2020*:

Drug overdose death rates were calculated per 100,000 race/ethnicity-specific population and the rates were highest among non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black populations compared to the Hispanic population. In 2020, drug overdose mortality rate substantially increased in non-Hispanic Black population compared to the previous year. The graph below represents the unintentional drug overdose mortality rate in Connecticut, by race/ethnicity for year 2019 and the first half of 2020* (January – June). Data are subject to change for 2020 by end of the year.



Drug overdose death rates were highest in the 35-44 years old age group in Connecticut, 2019 – June 2020*:

Drug overdose death rates were calculated per 100,000 age-specific population and the rates were highest among the 35-44 age group. The graph below represents the unintentional drug overdose mortality rate in Connecticut, by age for year 2019 and the first half of 2020 (January – June). Because of the pending cases and remaining 2nd half of year 2020*, data are subject to change.



Drug overdose death rates in Connecticut, by County, 2019 – June 2020*: Drug overdose death rates were calculated per 100,000 county-specific population. The graph below represents the unintentional drug overdose mortality rate in Connecticut, by county, for year 2019 and the first half of 2020 (January – June). In 2020, drug overdose mortality rate substantially increased in Middlesex county, compared to other counties. Because of the pending cases and remaining months, year 2020 data are subject to change.

