

Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths in Connecticut

September 2025

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT UNINTENTIONAL DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS IN CT, 2015-2024

Unintentional drug overdoses are one of the leading causes of injury-related deaths. Overall, the use of illegal opioids is the main cause for drug overdose-related deaths. **Fortunately, there was a 26.1% decrease in drug overdose deaths in 2024 compared to 2023.**

- As seen in previous years, in 2024 approximately 86% of drug overdose deaths were caused by an opioid (including illicit and prescription opioids).
- Approximately 78% of unintentional drug overdose deaths involved fentanyl.
- Xylazine, an animal tranquilizer, in combination with fentanyl continued to be a concern and was involved in 35% of the drug overdose deaths (N=342).

EMERGING SUBSTANCES

In 2024, carfentanil, a dangerous analog of fentanyl, also known as an elephant tranquilizer, was involved in 10 deaths; nitazenes, a family of novel synthetic opioids, in 10 deaths; and designer benzodiazepines in 39 deaths.

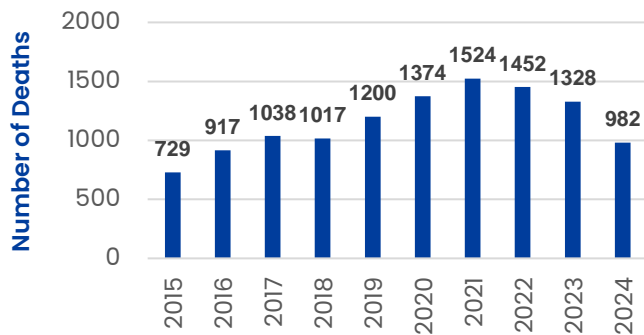
The Injury and Violence Surveillance Unit at Connecticut Public Health remains vigilant about new emerging substances and will inform the local communities as needed.

Data Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), Connecticut and State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS)

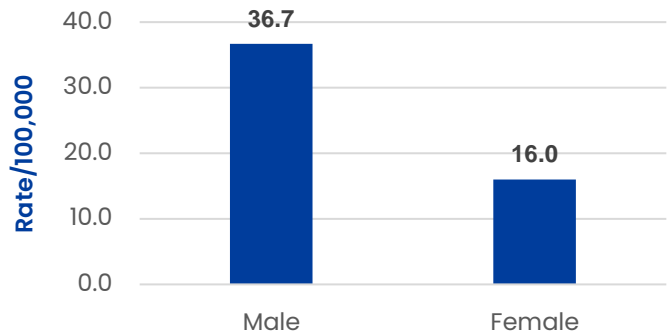
KEY POINTS

- There were 982 unintentional drug overdose deaths in Connecticut in 2024, representing a decrease of 346 deaths (-26.1%) compared to 2023 (1,328).
- Most of the decedents (72.3%) overdosed at a residence (either their own or someone else's).
- Males (36.7 per 100,000 population) had a higher age-adjusted mortality rate compared to females (16.0) in 2024.
- The non-Hispanic black population had the highest age-adjusted mortality rate (46.4) followed by the Hispanic (all races included) population (29.6).
- The highest mortality rates were seen in the 35-64 years age group.
- There was a decline in death rates across all age groups in 2024 compared to the previous years.
- In 2024, 60% of the deaths involved cocaine, a 5% increase from 2023.

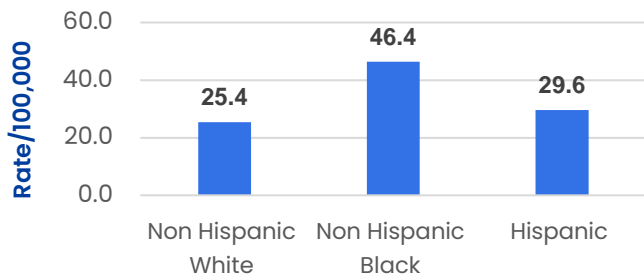
Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths in Connecticut, 2015–2024



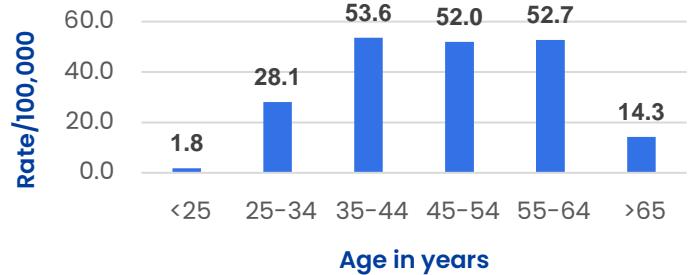
Age-Adjusted Drug Overdose Death Rates, by Sex, 2024 (Rate/100,000 population)



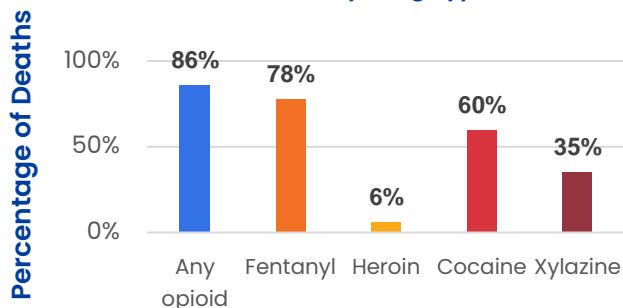
Age-Adjusted Drug Overdose Death Rates, by Race/Ethnicity, 2024



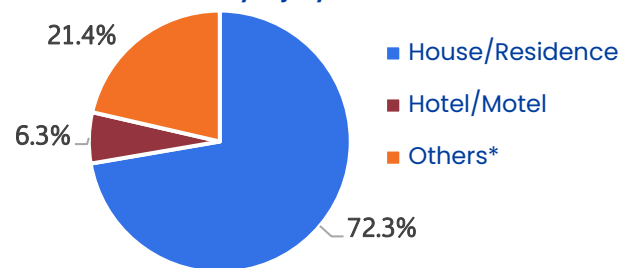
Age-Specific Drug Overdose Death Rates, by Age Groups, Connecticut, 2024



Percentage of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug Type, 2024



Percentage of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by Injury Place, 2024



*Other places included alley, street ways, parking garage, outdoors, etc.

HOW TO PREVENT DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS:

- Create awareness in communities by providing education on the dangerous consequences of using illicit opioids.
- Promote harm reduction choices and reduce stigma about substance use disorders.
- Learn about naloxone, the life-saving drug that reverses opioid overdoses. Visit: [norasaves.com](https://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 controlled substance prescriptions they write for patients.
- Enhance and promote Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) programs.

For further information visit: [drugfreet.org](https://www.drugfreet.org); ct.gov/dph/injuryprevention.