

# 2023 Data Brief | Fatal and Non-Fatal Drug Overdoses in Pennsylvania

4,722

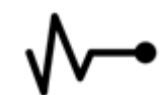
Any Drug Overdose Deaths in 2023

8.6%

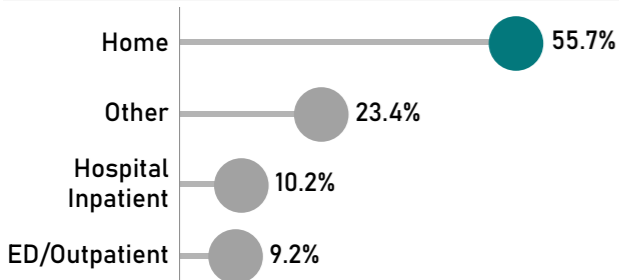
DECREASE in total overdose deaths from 2022

13 people,

on average, died every day from an overdose.



Of all drug overdose deaths, 55.7% occurred at the decedent's own home. Percent of Any Drug overdose deaths by death location



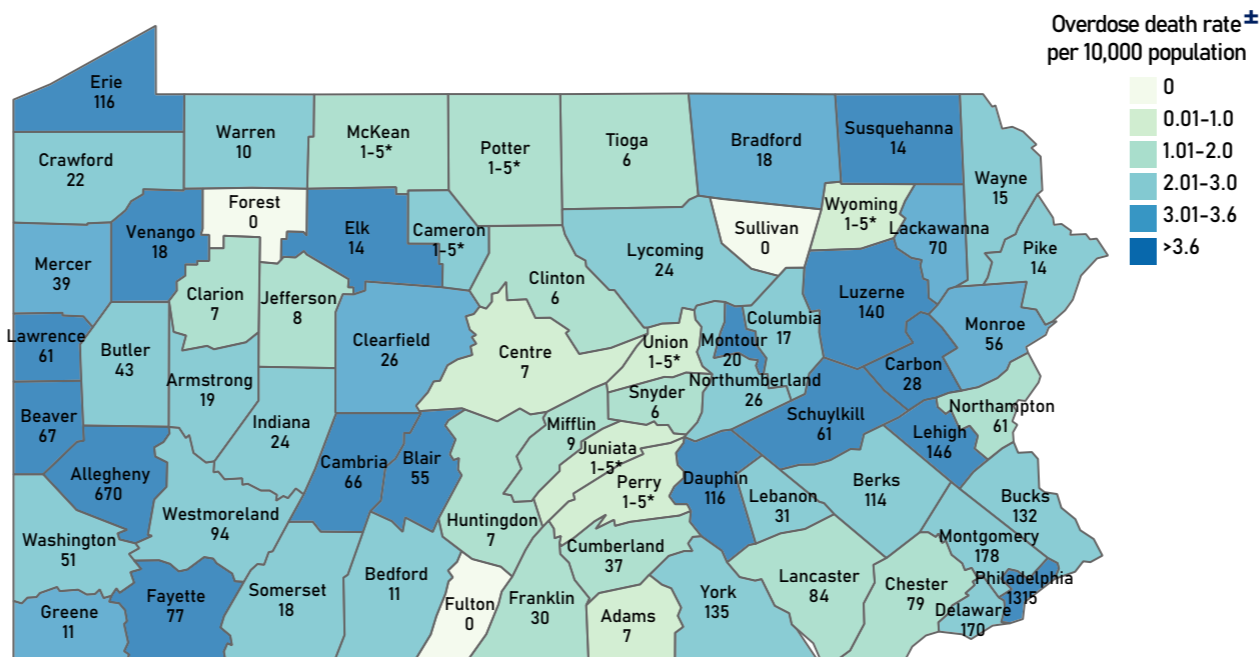
ED: Emergency Department; Locations accounting for <2% of overdose deaths were excluded.

Any Drug overdose deaths include overdoses from illicit, prescription, or over-the-counter drugs, and exclude alcohol-only related overdoses. Counts do not include suicides or homicides where someone intended to harm another person by poisoning.

± All rates represent crude overdose rates and are not age adjusted. Rates were calculated using population denominators from the United States Census Bureau Population Estimates, Vintage 2023. Data is current as of October 2024.

In 2023, the state average Any Drug overdose death rate was 3.6 deaths per 10,000 population, substantial differences in the rate exist across Pennsylvania's 67 counties.

County-level counts and rates of Any Drug overdose deaths ±

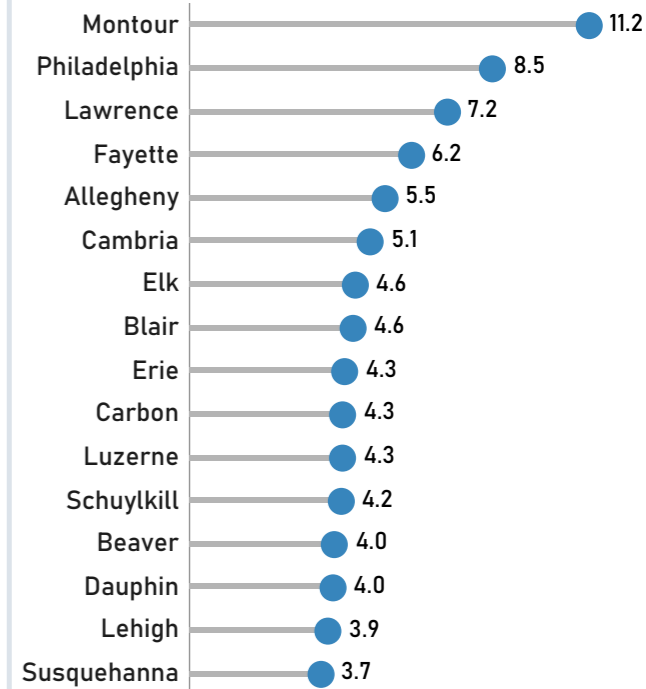


© OpenStreetMap

\*Counts between 1 and 5 are suppressed.

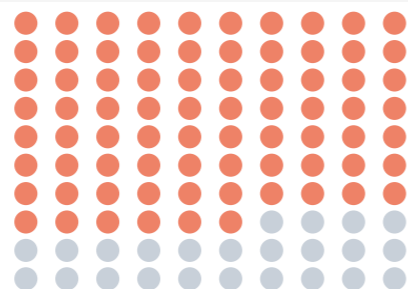
There were 16 counties with crude death rates higher than the state average.

Overdose death crude rate per 10,000 population ±



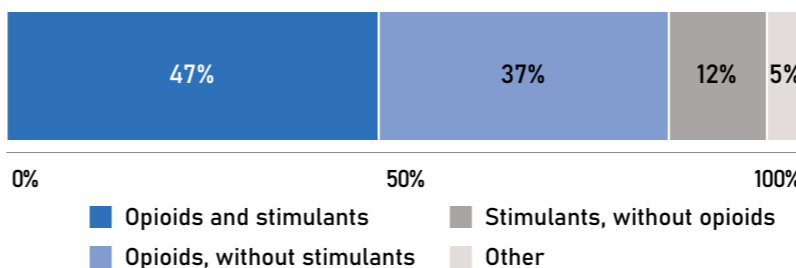
Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid, contributed to death in 77% of all fatal overdoses.<sup>1</sup>

Percent of fentanyl-involved deaths



47% of Any Drug overdose deaths involved the combination of opioids and stimulants.<sup>1,2</sup>

Percent of Any Drug overdose deaths by drug combination



Emerging substances identified across the state are contributing to overdose deaths.<sup>1,3</sup>

State-level counts of overdose deaths

Designer Benzodiazepines	149
Nitazenes	16
Carfentanil	1-5*
Tianeptine	1-5*
Medetomidine	0

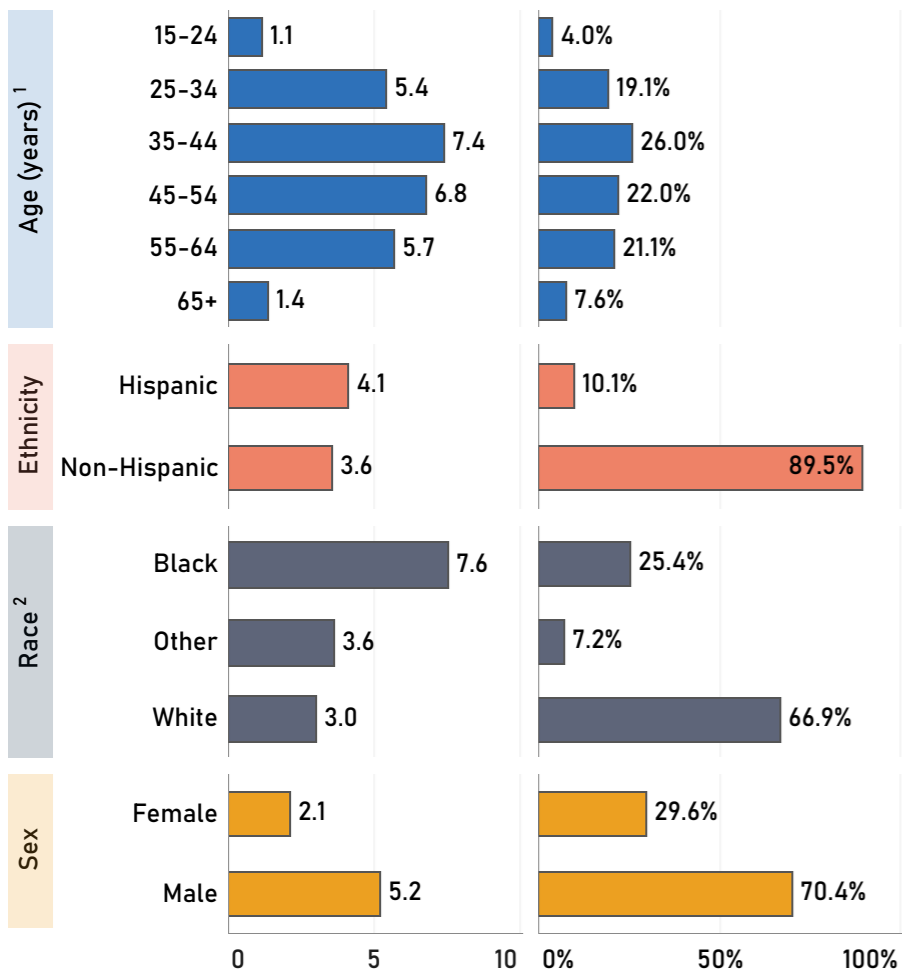
\*Counts between 1 and 5 are suppressed.

1) Overdose deaths can involve more than one substance, 2% of overdose deaths are missing toxicology data. 2) Opioid deaths had at least one opioid as cause of death (fentanyl, heroin, prescription opioids, or any other opioid). Stimulant deaths had at least one stimulant as cause of death (cocaine, amphetamines, central nervous stimulants, or any other stimulant). 3) Not all standard toxicology testing includes these emerging substances, counts are likely under-reported.

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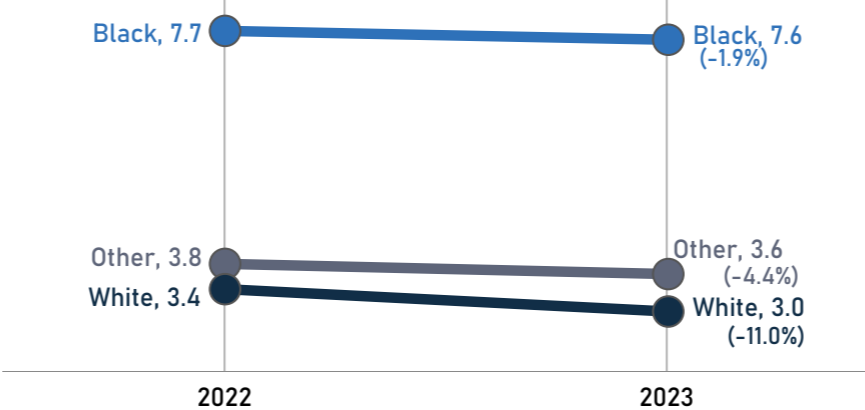
Overdose death rates were the highest among those **ages 35-44 years old**, **Hispanic persons**, **Black persons**, and **males**.

Overdose death rate per 10,000 population<sup>±</sup> Percent of total overdose deaths



In 2023, overdose death rates decreased the most among **white persons**, compared to **Black** and **Other** persons of color.

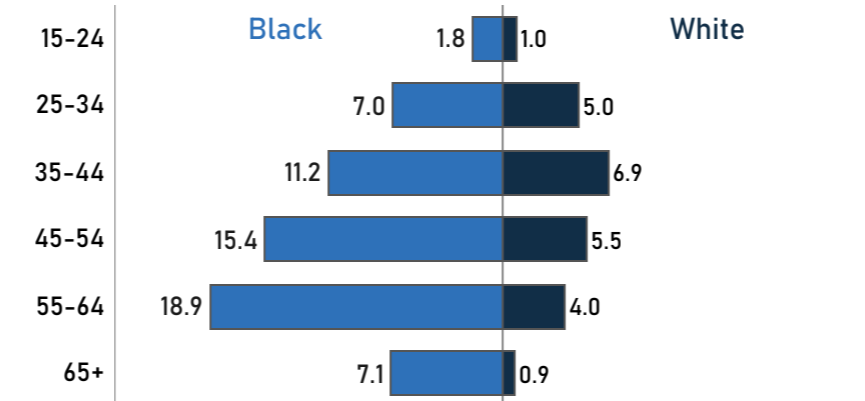
Overdose death rate per 10,000 population by race (percent change from 2022)<sup>±</sup>



Other persons of color include persons who identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Other Race

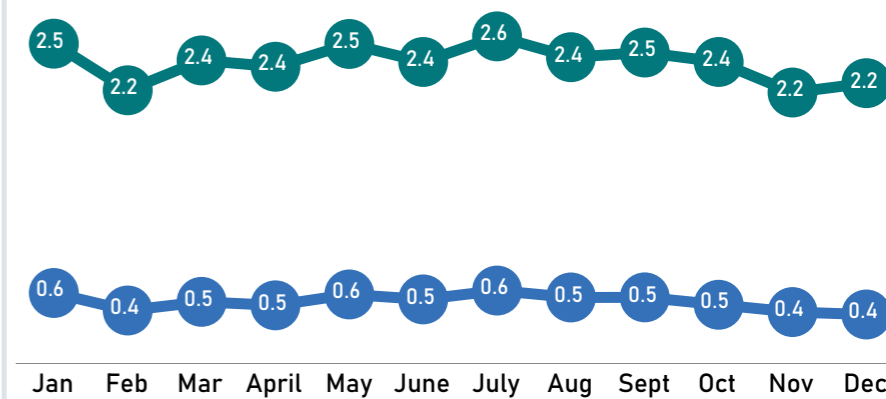
**Black persons**, of any age, had a higher overdose death rate compared to **white persons** of the same age.

Overdose death rate per 10,000 population by race and age



Emergency department visits for **Any Drug** and **Any Opioid** overdoses vary seasonally, rates peak in July.

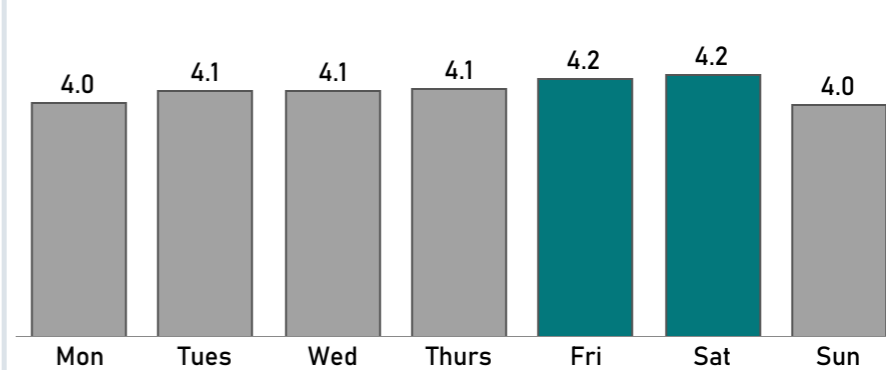
Emergency department visit rate per 10,000 population<sup>±</sup>



Any Drug include overdoses from any substance (illicit, prescription, over-the-counter). Any Opioid include overdoses from illicit or prescription opioids.

Emergency department visits for **Any Drug overdoses** are more likely to occur on **Fridays** and **Saturdays** of each week.

Any Drug emergency department visit rate per 10,000 population by day of week<sup>±</sup>



1) Decedents aged 0-14 years were excluded.

2) Other persons of color include persons who identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Other Race

Through grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) has collected both fatal and non-fatal overdose data from a variety of sources. Fatal overdose data includes death record data from the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries at the Pennsylvania DOH, as well as toxicology and coroner/medical examiner reports through partnerships with individual county coroners/medical examiners and the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. Non-fatal overdose data includes syndromic surveillance data through our partnerships with emergency departments. Rates were calculated using population denominators from the United States Census Bureau Population Estimates, Vintage 2023. Data is current as of October 2024.