

## Drug Poisoning Mortality, by State and by Race and Ethnicity: United States, 2019

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In 2019, 70,630 deaths from the toxic effects of drug poisoning (drug overdose) occurred in the United States (1), a 4.8% increase compared with 2018 and the highest recorded number in recent history. Drug overdose deaths remain a persistent and urgent public health problem in the United States. This NCHS *Health E-Stat* provides information on drug overdose mortality by state (and the District of Columbia) and by race and ethnicity, and adds to findings from a recently published *Data Brief* on drug overdose death rates (1).

The age-adjusted rate for drug overdose deaths in the United States for 2019 was 21.6 per 100,000 standard population (Figure 1, Table). The five states with the highest rates were West Virginia (52.8), Delaware (48.0), District of Columbia (43.2), Ohio (38.3), and Maryland (38.2). The five states with the lowest rates were Nebraska (8.7), South Dakota (10.5), Texas (10.8), North Dakota (11.4), and Iowa (11.5).

The age-adjusted drug overdose death rate for the non-Hispanic white population in 2019 (26.2 per 100,000 standard population) was 21.3% higher than the national rate (Figure 2). The rate for the non-Hispanic black population (24.8) was 14.8% higher than the national rate. The rate for the non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native population (30.5) was 41.2% higher than the national rate. The rate for the non-Hispanic Asian population (3.3) was 84.7% lower than the national rate. The rate for the non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander population (9.5) was 56.0% lower than the national rate. The rate for the Hispanic population (12.7) was 41.2% lower than the national rate.

### Data source and methods

Data are from the National Vital Statistics System Multiple Cause-of-death file for 2019. Deaths and death rates were produced using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WONDER online database (2). Drug overdose deaths were classified using *International Statistical Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* underlying cause-of-death codes X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, and Y10–Y14.

Starting with 2018 data, the National Vital Statistics System has presented mortality statistics by race using the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) 1997 standards for collecting, tabulating, and reporting race and ethnicity in the United States (3). Estimates for prior years were produced according to the 1977 OMB standards (4). Single-race estimates based on the 1997 OMB standards may not be comparable to estimates for earlier years that were produced by

bridging multiple-race choices back to a single-race category. This lack of comparability applies particularly to the race categories with smaller populations (5).

Death rates for non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native, and Hispanic persons may be underestimated and should be interpreted with caution (6).

Age-adjusted death rates were calculated using the direct method and the 2000 U.S. standard population. Vintage 2019 population data were single-race postcensal estimates of the July 1 resident population produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and released on June 25, 2020. The statistical significance of differences between the national rate and those computed for the race and Hispanic-origin populations was assessed using a *z* test. Any differences mentioned (higher than, lower than) were significant at the 0.05 level. State-specific rates were ranked and classified according to the percentile distribution of all the values. Statistical significance was not assessed to compare the state-specific death rates.

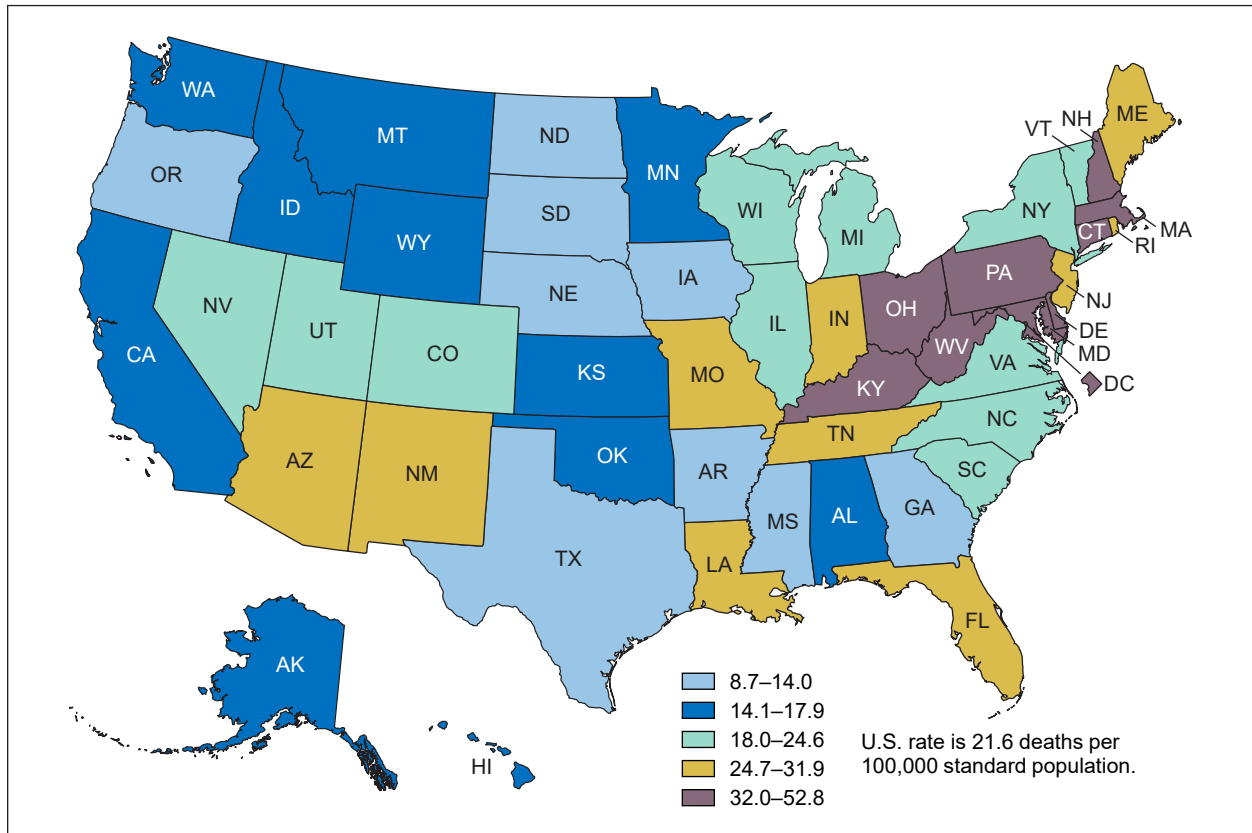
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## Suggested citation

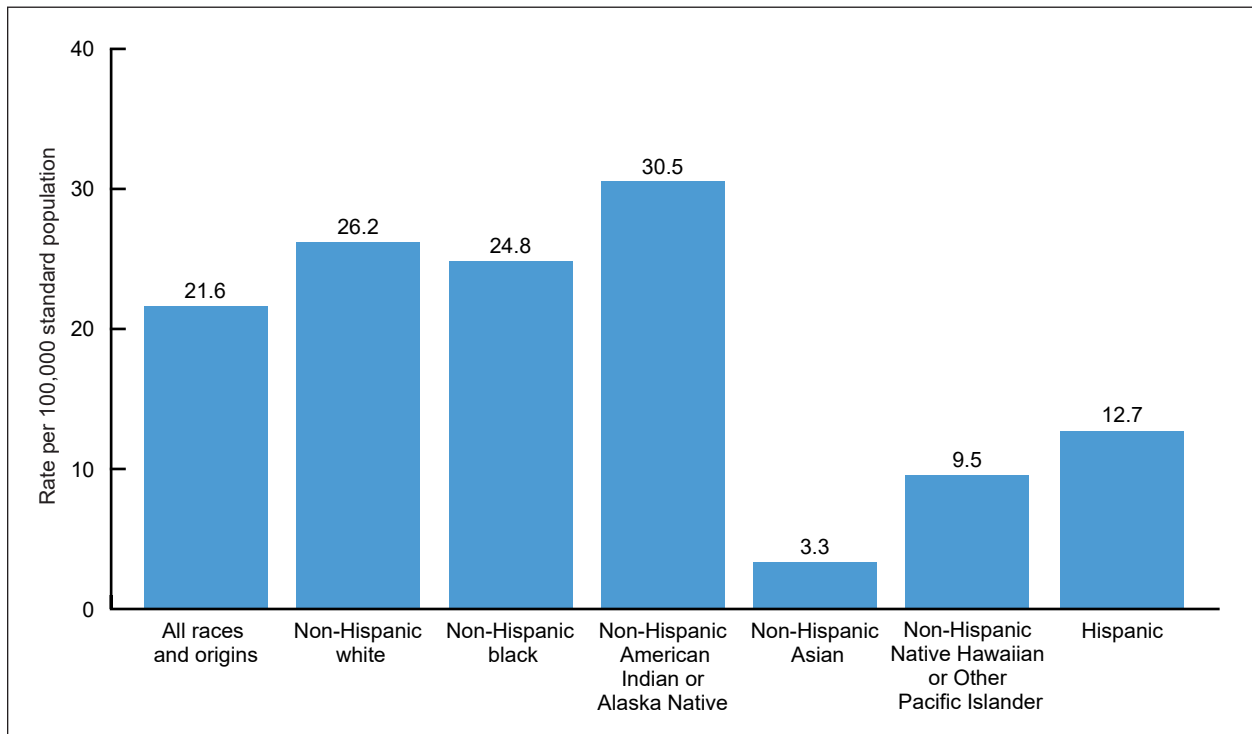
Miniño AM, Hedegaard H. Drug poisoning mortality, by state and by race and ethnicity: United States, 2019. NCHS Health E-Stats. 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc:103967>.

Figure 1. Age-adjusted drug overdose death rates, by state: United States, 2019



NOTES: Drug overdose deaths were identified using *International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* underlying cause-of-death codes X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, and Y10–Y14. Age-adjusted death rates were calculated using the direct method and the 2000 U.S. standard population.  
 SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

Figure 2. Age-adjusted drug overdose death rates, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, 2019



NOTES: Drug overdose deaths were identified using *International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* underlying cause-of-death codes X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, and Y10–Y14. Age-adjusted death rates were calculated using the direct method and the 2000 U.S. standard population.  
 SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

**Table. Number and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths, by state:  
United States, 2019**

Area	Number	Deaths per 100,000
United States	70,630	21.6
Alabama	768	16.3
Alaska	132	17.8
Arizona	1,907	26.8
Arkansas	388	13.5
California	6,198	15.0
Colorado	1,079	18.0
Connecticut	1,214	34.7
Delaware	435	48.0
District of Columbia	311	43.2
Florida	5,268	25.5
Georgia	1,408	13.1
Hawaii	242	15.9
Idaho	265	15.1
Illinois	2,790	21.9
Indiana	1,699	26.6
Iowa	352	11.5
Kansas	403	14.3
Kentucky	1,380	32.5
Louisiana	1,267	28.3
Maine	371	29.9
Maryland	2,369	38.2
Massachusetts	2,210	32.1
Michigan	2,385	24.4
Minnesota	792	14.2
Mississippi	394	13.6
Missouri	1,583	26.9
Montana	143	14.1
Nebraska	161	8.7
Nevada	647	20.1
New Hampshire	407	32.0
New Jersey	2,805	31.7
New Mexico	599	30.2
New York	3,617	18.2
North Carolina	2,266	22.3
North Dakota	82	11.4
Ohio	4,251	38.3
Oklahoma	645	16.7
Oregon	615	14.0
Pennsylvania	4,377	35.6
Rhode Island	307	29.5
South Carolina	1,127	22.7
South Dakota	86	10.5
Tennessee	2,089	31.2
Texas	3,136	10.8
Utah	571	18.9
Vermont	133	23.8
Virginia	1,547	18.3
Washington	1,259	15.8
West Virginia	870	52.8
Wisconsin	1,201	21.1
Wyoming	79	14.1

NOTES: Drug overdose deaths were identified using *International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* underlying cause-of-death codes X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, and Y10–Y14. Age-adjusted death rates were calculated using the direct method and the 2000 U.S. standard population.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.