



Twenty twenty-one
RESTART WITH RESILIENCE
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Rx DRUGS & OPIOIDS

factsheet
FOR LEGISLATORS

opioids

/'ōpē,oid/ • *noun* • plural noun: opioids

opioids are a class of drugs that includes prescription drugs like oxycodone, hydrocodone and synthetic opioids like fentanyl and illegal drugs like heroin.



Voices for Prevention (V4P) along with 58 other prevention coalitions in Georgia work diligently to prevent the misuse of, abuse of, addiction to and overdose from prescription (Rx) drugs, as well as illegal opioids.

According to Dr. Nora Volkow of the National Institute on Drug Abuse the stress and isolation of the pandemic have placed enormous challenges on individuals across the country. Significant increases in many kinds of drug use and overdoses have been recorded since March 2020, when a national emergency was declared, and our lives radically changed due to lockdown and the closure of businesses and schools.



The misuse of Rx drugs, particularly opioids, is more prevalent than the use of cocaine, methamphetamine, MDMA, and PCP COMBINED.



V4P VOICES
FOR PREVENTION

V4PGA.ORG
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SOURCES

Opioid Overdose Surveillance, Preliminary Report, Georgia, 2018. Georgia Department of Public Health, Drug Overdose Surveillance Unit. Available at <https://dph.georgia.gov/drug-overdose-surveillance-unit>



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The Prevention of the misuse of, abuse of, addiction to and overdose from Rx opioids is a complicated problem requiring a strategic, coordinated, and solution-focused approach in order to address the following numbers:



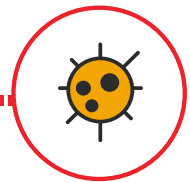
An analysis of a nationwide sample of 500,000 urine drug test results conducted by Millennium Health also showed steep increases in mid-March for cocaine (up 10 percent), heroin (up 13 percent), methamphetamine (up 20 percent) and non-prescribed fentanyl (up 32 percent).



Persons aged 25-34 years more frequently died from fentanyl-involved overdose and visited an ED (Emergency Department) for an opioid-involved overdose than persons of other age categories, yet persons aged 45 and older were more frequently hospitalized because of an opioid-involved overdose.



High rates of opioid overdose-involved ED (Emergency Department) visits and hospitalizations occurred among residents in both urban and rural areas, particularly in North, South Central, and Southeast Georgia.



In April and May of 2020, the Addiction Policy Forum (APF) conducted a survey of 1,079 people with substance use disorder nationwide, asking them how they were being impacted by the pandemic. The APF found “that 20% of the respondents reported that their own or a family member’s substance use had increased since the start of the pandemic.



In 2019, among Georgia residents: opioid-involved overdoses accounted for 4,858 ED (Emergency Department) visits, 2,174 hospitalizations, and 860 deaths.



Heroin-involved overdoses accounted for 1,416 ED (Emergency Department) visits, 339 hospitalizations, and 307 deaths.



The highest numbers of heroin- and opioid-involved overdose deaths, ED (Emergency Department) visits, and hospitalizations occurred predominantly among residents in urban areas.



Males aged 35-44 years died from an opioid-involved overdose more frequently than any other age category and were 2.3 times more likely to die from an overdose than females of the same age.



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