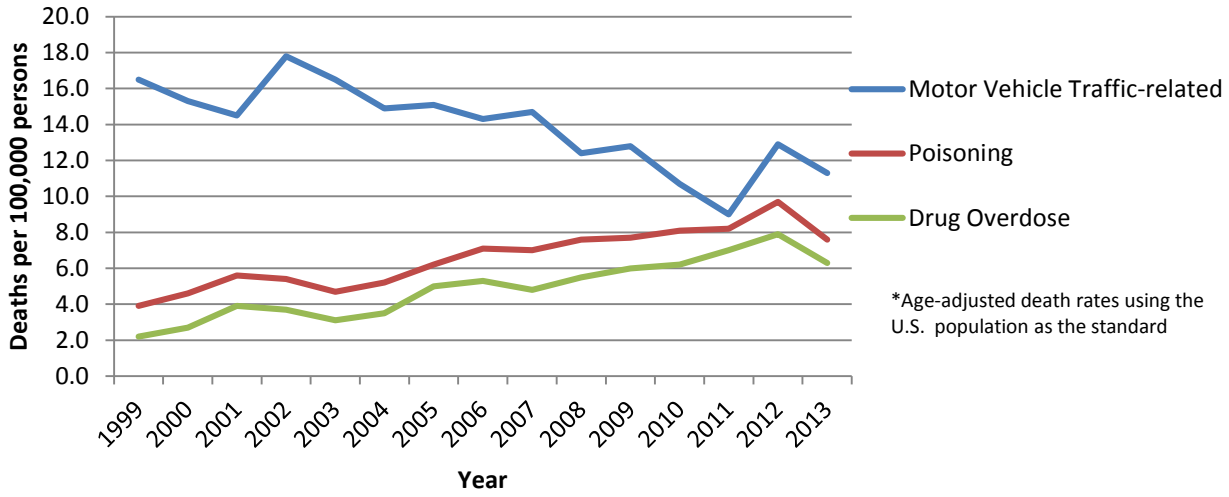
Nebraska

Special Emphasis Report: Drug Overdose Deaths, 1999-2013

A Public Health Crisis Continues

Poisoning is now the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury deaths in Nebraska, and drugs cause nearly 7 out of 10 poisoning deaths. Drug poisoning deaths, also called overdoses, quadrupled since 1999, almost surpassing motor vehicle traffic-related deaths in 2011 (Figure 1). In 2012, so far the peak in the poisoning and drug overdose death rate, the poisoning death rate was 9.7 deaths per 100,000 persons, and the drug overdose death rate was 7.9 deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to a motor vehicle traffic-related death rate of 12.9 deaths per 100,000 persons.

Figure 1. Drug overdose death rates* compared to motor vehicle-related death rates, Nebraska residents, 1999 - 2013



Addressing the Issue

- The Injury Prevention Program works with partners to educate the public about the problem of prescription drug overdose in Nebraska. Partners include the Nebraska Pharmacists Association, the Regional Poison Center, the Nebraska MEDS Coalition, local public health departments, health care providers and others.
- To reduce the availability of unused medication that may result in unintentional poisoning or illegal use and to provide education, the Nebraska MEDS Coalition has hosted Medication Take Back Days. www.nebraskameds.org
- The Nebraska Pharmacists Association has received funding to implement a Statewide Medication Disposal Initiative- Preventing Poisoning, Pollution, and Prescription Drug Overdose. www.npharm.org

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Nebraska Injury Prevention Program dhhs.ne.gov/injuryprevention

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