



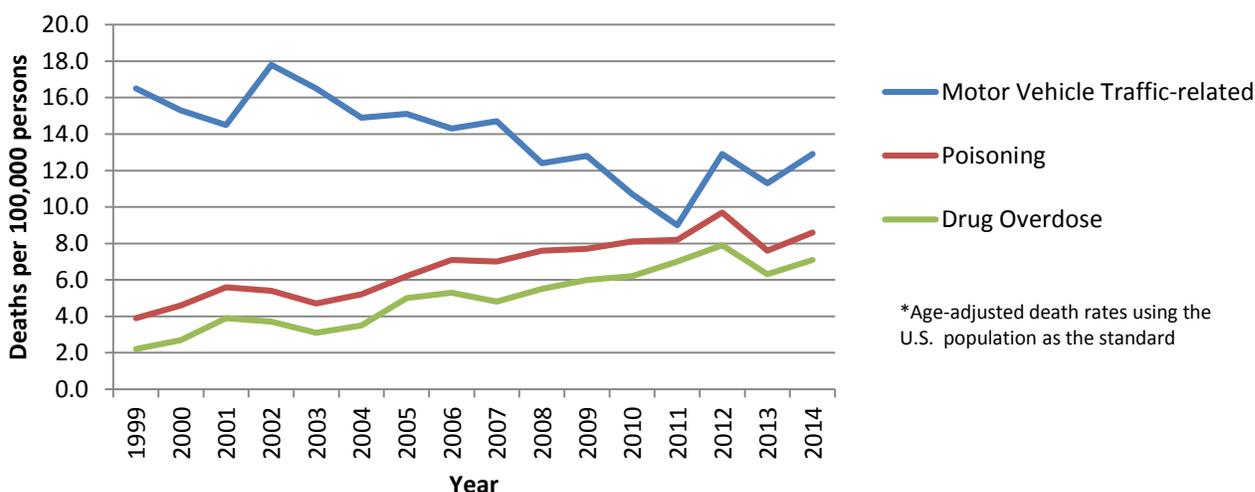
Nebraska

Special Emphasis Report: Drug Overdose Deaths, 1999-2014

A Public Health Crisis Continues

Poisoning is the third leading cause of injury deaths in Nebraska, and drugs caused 8 out of 10 poisoning deaths in 2014. Drug poisoning deaths, also called overdoses, tripled since 1999, almost surpassing motor vehicle traffic-related deaths in 2011 (Figure 1). In 2014, the poisoning death rate was 8.6 deaths per 100,000 persons, and the drug overdose death rate was 7.1 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, 1999-2014



*Age-adjusted death rates using the U.S. population as the standard

Drugs Caused 8 out of 10 Poisoning Deaths

In 2014, drugs and medications –prescription drugs, illicit drugs, and over-the-counter medications, - were the underlying cause of death for 81% of all poisoning deaths. Of the drug overdose deaths, 74% were unintentional, 20% were suicide or intentional self-harm, and 6% had undetermined intent. Males and females had approximately equal rates and persons aged 45-54 years had the highest rate of all age categories.

Table 1. Drug overdose deaths: Demographic characteristics and intent, Nebraska residents, 2014

		Number	Percent	Rate per 100,000 persons
Gender	Female	64	52%	6.8
	Male	60	48%	6.4
Age (in years)*	15-24	9	7%	3.4
	25-44	60	48%	12.5
	45-54	32	26%	13.4
	55 and older	22	18%	4.3
Intent	Unintentional (also known as “accidental”)	92	74%	
	Suicide	25	20%	
	Undetermined	7	6%	

*0-14 age group not included due to small numbers.



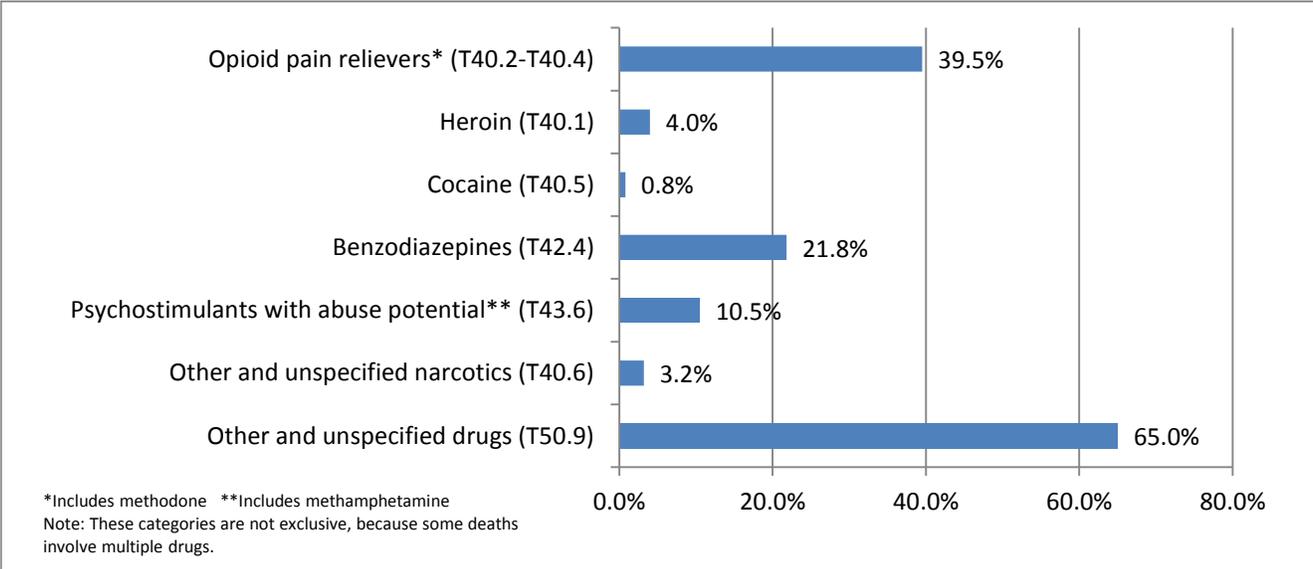
Nebraska

Special Emphasis Report: Drug Overdose Deaths, 1999-2014

Opioid Pain Relievers Contributed to 40% of Drug Overdose Deaths

Opioid pain relievers, such as oxycodone or hydrocodone, contributed to 49 (40 percent) of 124 drug overdose deaths in 2014. These results might be undercounts, because the percent of drug overdose deaths that had only unspecified drug(s) listed as contributing to the death ranged from 67 percent in 1999 to 42 percent in 2014.

Figure 2. Proportion of drug overdose deaths involving selected drugs, Nebraska Residents, 2014



Addressing the Issue

- The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services 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 Nebraska 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 received funding to implement a Statewide Medication Disposal Initiative. www.nebraskameds.org

Data source: Nebraska Death Certificate data