

Unintentional Drug Poisoning in Oregon



Oregon Injury Prevention and Epidemiology Program Fact Sheet

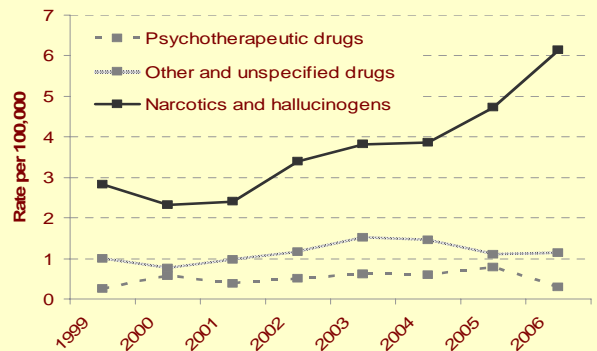
Deaths

BASIC FACTS

- There were 298 unintentional poisoning deaths in Oregon in 2006; 96% were due to drugs and medicines.
- Among Oregonians 35-54 years of age, there were more unintentional poisoning deaths due to drugs and medicines in 2006 than deaths due to motor vehicle traffic.
- The rate of unintentional poisoning mortality associated with opioid drugs and methadone increased faster than any other types of drugs.
- It is not known what proportion of drug poisoning deaths and hospitalizations are due to abuse or misuse of prescription drugs.

- Drug-associated poisonings in Oregon have increased substantially in recent years. The rate of unintentional poisoning deaths due to drugs and medicines was 7.8 deaths per 100,000 in 2006— up 90% since 1999.
- Over 1,100 deaths among Oregonians in the past 5 years resulted from unintentional poisoning due to drugs and medicines.
- The rate of narcotic associated poisoning deaths increased more than 100% between 1999 and 2006— more than any other category of drug; much of the increase was associated with drugs that treat pain.
- 93% of narcotic-associated deaths in 2006 were among Caucasians, and over 70% were male.
- The rate of mortality among 45-54 year-olds due to narcotic-associated poisoning increased faster than any other age group between 1999 and 2006.

Rate of Drug Poisoning Deaths by Year and Drug Type, Oregon, 1999-2006.



Rates based on Portland State University Population estimates, 2007

Hospitalization

- Unintentional poisoning hospitalizations due to drugs and medicines have increased over 100% in the past 10 years (from 12 to 25 per 100,000), even as poisonings due to other causes (such as chemicals and gases) remained virtually unchanged.
- Hospitalizations due to opiates and related narcotics (excluding methadone and heroin), which includes typical prescription "painkillers" increased over 500% in 10 years.
- Nearly 4,000 hospitalizations in Oregon in the past 5 years were associated with unintentional poisoning due to drugs and medicines. This is not inclusive of patients treated and released from hospital emergency rooms.
- Total hospitalization charges due to opiates and related narcotics increased from \$93,000 in 1997 to \$2.2 million in 2006—a near 24-fold increase in 10 years. The total cost of hospitalization due to drug poisoning exceeded \$11 million in 2006.

Rate of Poisoning Hospitalization by Poison Type, Oregon, 1997-2006

