

2025

Opioids and the Ongoing Drug Overdose Crisis in Oregon

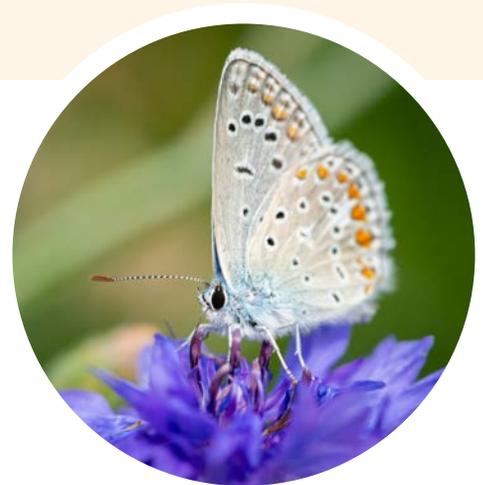
Report to the Legislature

Executive summary

This report summarizes the burden of fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses among Oregonians from January – December 2024, as required by ORS 432.141. This report includes the most currently available and finalized overdose data for a full calendar year. Some of the data presented in this report may no longer reflect current trends, given how rapidly Oregon’s overdose crisis is evolving.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) presents this information with the acknowledgment that it represents the deaths of people whose loss has an enormous impact on their families and communities.

In 2024, 1,544 people died of a drug overdose in Oregon, a decrease of 16% compared to 1,833 deaths in 2023. Fentanyl and methamphetamine continued to be the most common substances identified in drug overdose deaths, with over 90% of fatal overdoses involving fentanyl, methamphetamine, or a combination of both substances. In 2024, 62.2% of Oregon overdose deaths involved multiple substances (polysubstance), with the majority (70%) of polysubstance overdose deaths involving fentanyl *and* methamphetamine.



Oregon's illicit drug supply continues to rapidly evolve, presenting additional challenges to effective response to the overdose epidemic. Oregon's illicit drug market now includes the veterinary tranquilizer xylazine, the industrial chemical bis (2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-4-piperidyl) sebacate (BTMPS), medetomidine, and other emerging substances of concern. Additionally, the Oregon-Idaho High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program classified cocaine as an emerging drug threat due to the increase in seizure incidents and seizure sizes across Oregon in 2024.

In 2024, the number of overdose deaths decreased for the first time in Oregon since 2016. This decrease was primarily influenced by a reduction in the number of fentanyl-related deaths. Overdoses involving only stimulants remained stable throughout 2024. It is challenging to pinpoint the specific cause of this decreasing trend because it is likely due to multiple factors, including fentanyl saturation within the illicit drug market and decreases in population-level drug use.¹

While the 2024 decrease in overdose deaths is heartening, Oregon health care systems remain heavily burdened by overdose-related encounters. In 2024, there were 4,193 inpatient hospitalizations associated with a drug overdose and 10,365 overdose-related emergency department visits. This data does not account for overdoses that are reversed in community settings using opioid overdose reversal medications like naloxone. If a person does not receive health care services related to an overdose, their experience is missed by current overdose monitoring systems. This leads to an underreporting of nonfatal Oregon overdoses. Furthermore, overdoses are just the tip of the iceberg of substance use disorder impacts. Although not everyone with a substance use disorder will experience an overdose, their lives and their family, friends and community may still be heavily impacted by their substance use.

It is important to note that the 2024 decreasing overdose trend represents a statewide average. These decreases are not experienced consistently across different regions or communities. Despite decreases across most age groups, adults aged 65 and older experienced increases in overdoses between 2023 and 2024. Black/African American communities and American Indian/Alaska Native communities continue to experience the highest rates of fatal and nonfatal overdoses in Oregon. These communities have disproportionately experienced systemic racism, social-economic-political injustices and systemic bias. These inequities can worsen health outcomes and increase the risk of experiencing a drug overdose.

1 Why have overdose deaths decreased? Widespread fentanyl saturation and decreased drug use among key drivers. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667193X25002364>

Oregon's overdose rates represent an ongoing and complex public health crisis created by multiple social, economic, and systemic factors. There is no single policy, initiative, or intervention that one agency, sector, or state system could implement to fix what has been decades in the making. Addressing this crisis requires a cross-agency, multisector response to simultaneously address factors contributing to substance use and overdose.

OHA's strategic approaches to address the overdose crisis closely align with the [2026–2030 Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission \(ADPC\) Comprehensive Plan](#), the [2024–2027 OHA Strategic Plan](#), and the [2025–2029 State Health Improvement Plan](#). Collectively, these strategies aim to improve Oregon's statewide prevention, treatment, recovery, and response systems by comprehensively addressing the substance misuse and overdose crisis, centering equity in policies and investments, and supporting individuals and communities.

This document is the executive summary of the 2025 Opioids and the Ongoing Drug Overdose Crisis in Oregon Report. [The full report is available online.](#)

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact the Injury and Violence Prevention Program at IVPP.General@odhsoha.oregon.gov or 971-673-0741 (voice). We accept all relay calls.

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