

CDC: Drugs involved in overdose deaths varied regionally in 2017

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(HealthDay)—The drugs most frequently involved in drug overdose

deaths in 2017 varied regionally in the United States, according to a study published online Oct. 25 in the *National Health Statistics Reports*, a publication from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Holly Hedegaard, M.D., M.S.P.H., from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, and colleagues linked data from the 2017 National Vital Statistics System-Mortality files to electronic files containing literal text information from death certificates to describe regional differences in drugs involved in drug overdose deaths. The number and age-adjusted death rate were ascertained for the 10 drugs most frequently involved in drug overdose deaths nationally and for each U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) region.

The researchers found that the 10 drugs most frequently involved among drug overdose deaths in 2017 that mentioned at least one specific drug on the [death certificate](#) included fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, alprazolam, oxycodone, morphine, methadone, hydrocodone, and diphenhydramine. Six drugs were found among the 10 most frequently involved drugs in all 10 HHS regions (alprazolam, cocaine, fentanyl, heroin, methadone, and oxycodone), although there was variation in relative ranking by region. In regions east of the Mississippi River, age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl or deaths involving cocaine were higher; in the West, age-adjusted rates for [drug](#) overdose deaths involving methamphetamine were higher.

"Understanding these [regional differences](#) in the drugs most frequently involved in [drug overdose deaths](#) may help inform prevention and policy efforts," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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