

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Arkansas Opioid Summary

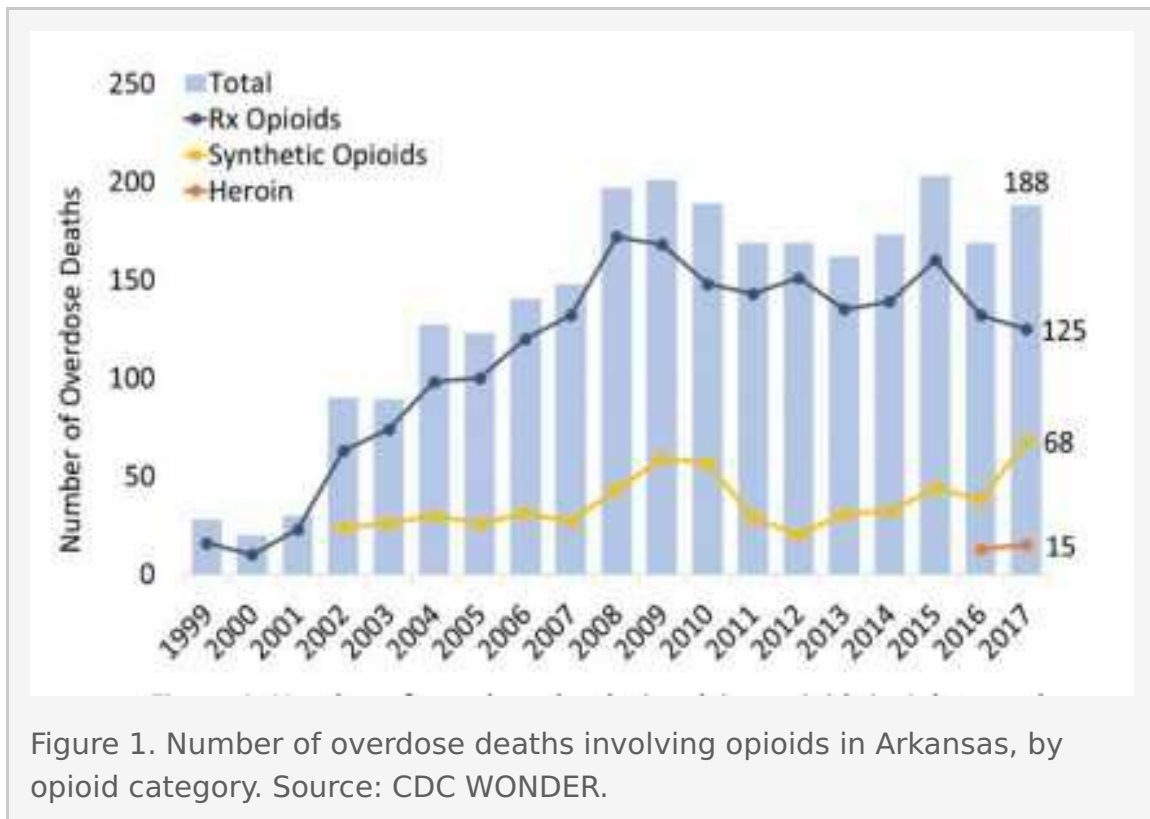
Last Updated April 2019

<https://www.drugabuse.gov>

Arkansas Opioid Summary

Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths

In 2017, there were 188 overdose deaths involving opioids in Arkansas—a rate of 6.5 deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to the national rate of 14.6 deaths per 100,000 persons. The number of deaths involving opioids included 125 prescription opioids, 68 related to synthetic opioids (mainly fentanyl), and 15 related to heroin (Figure 1). In recent years, drug overdose deaths involving prescription opioids have decreased while those related to synthetic opioids have increased.



Opioid Pain Reliever Prescriptions

In 2017, Arkansas providers wrote 105.4 opioid prescriptions for every 100 persons (Figure 2)—nearly twofold greater than the average U.S. rate of 58.7 opioid prescriptions ([CDC](#)). While the opioid prescribing

rate has steadily declined since 2014, the rate of overdose deaths involving prescription opioids has ticked up and down since 2012 (Figure 2). Overall, there has been a decline since 2007, with 4.4 overdose deaths per 100,000 persons in 2017—a total of 125 deaths.

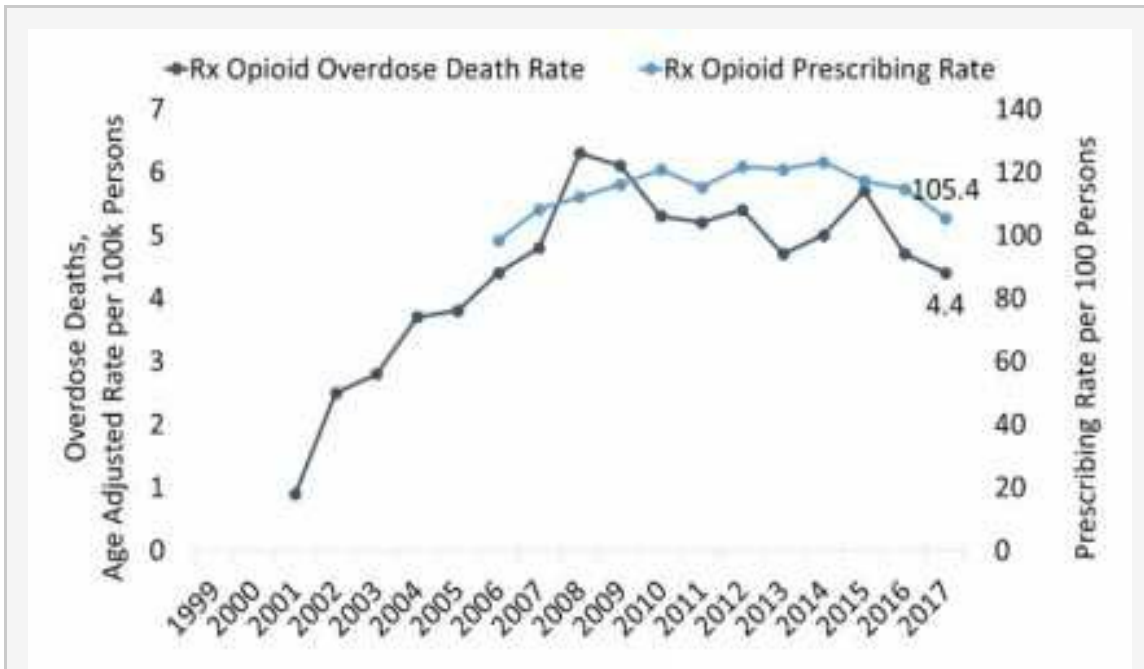


Figure 2. Arkansas rate of overdose deaths involving prescriptions opioids and the opioid prescribing rate. Source: CDC WONDER.

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)

NAS or neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS) may occur when a pregnant woman uses drugs such as opioids during pregnancy. A recent national study showed a fivefold increase in the incidence of NAS/NOWS between 2004 and 2014, from 1.5 cases per 1,000 hospital births to 8.0 cases per 1,000 hospital births—that is one baby born with NAS/NOWS every 15 minutes. During the same period, hospital costs for NAS/NOWS births increased from \$91 million to \$563 million, after adjusting for inflation (Figure 3).

Between 2000 and 2014, the rate of NAS/NOWS in Arkansas increased more than tenfold, from 0.3 per 1,000 hospital births to 3.2 per 1,000 hospital births ([Arkansas Department of Health](#)). The rate was four times higher among whites, including Hispanics, (4.1 per 1,000 hospital

births) compared to non-whites (1.1 per 1,000 hospital births).

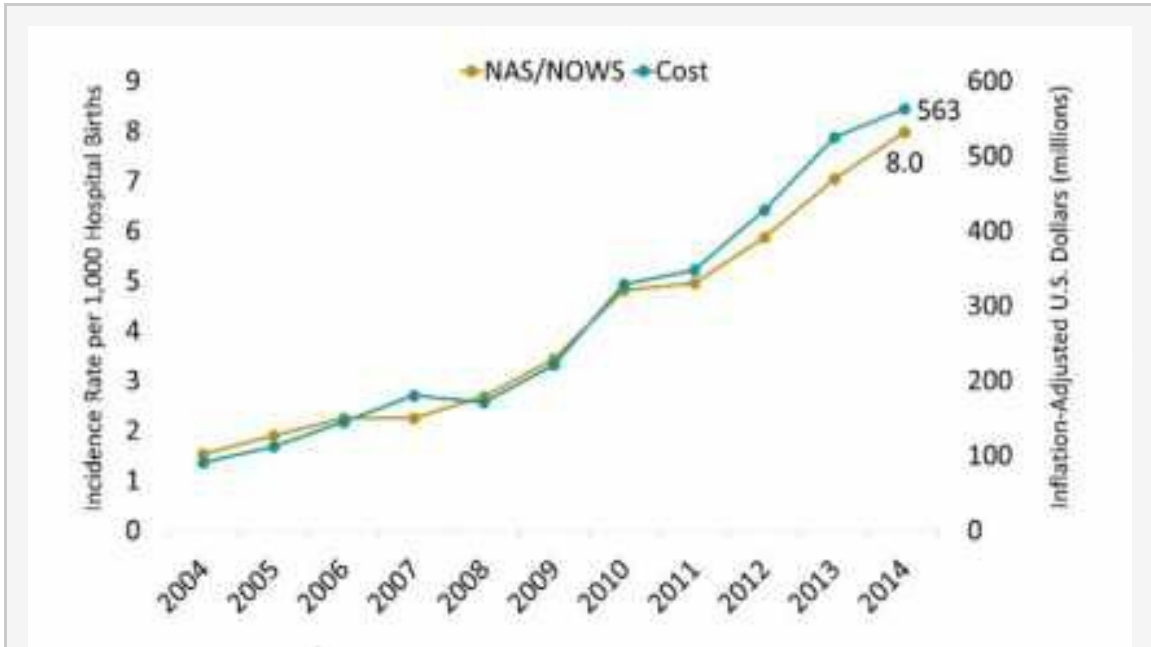


Figure 3. NAS/NOW Incidence Rate and Hospital Costs for Treatment in the United States. Source: T.N.A. Winkelman, et al., 2018.

HIV Prevalence and HIV Diagnoses Attributed to Injection Drug Use (IDU)

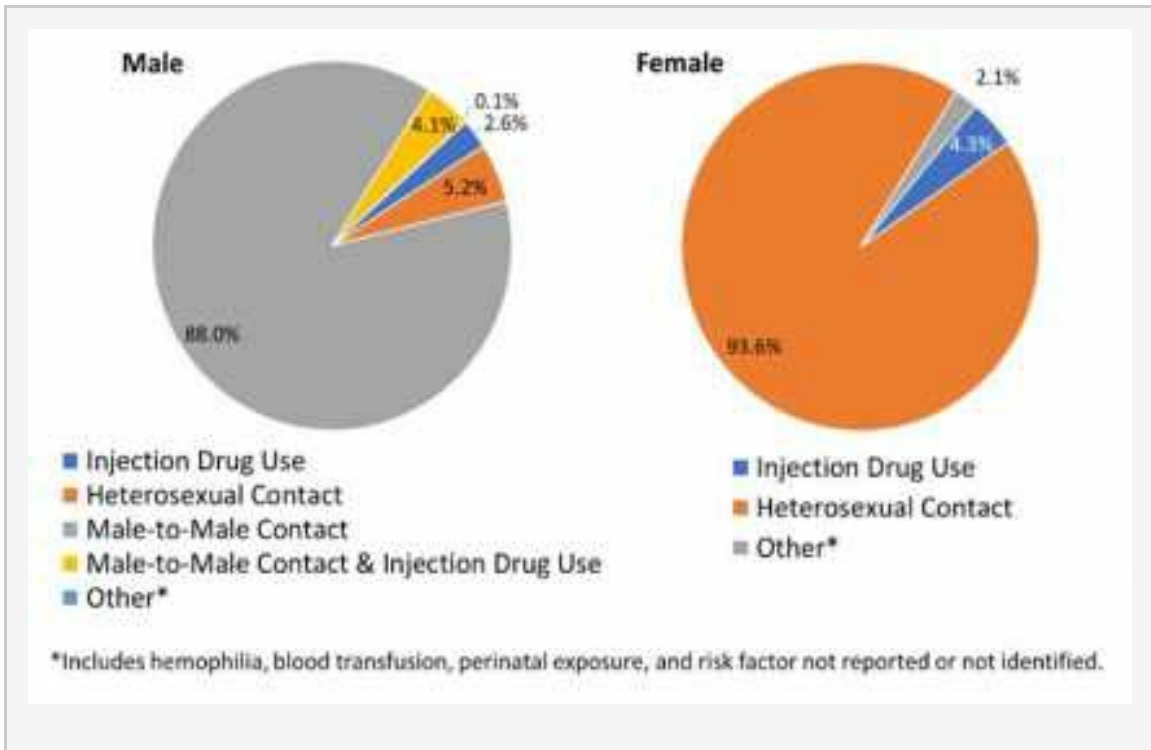


Figure 4. Arkansas: Estimated percent of male vs. female with new HIV diagnoses, by transmission category, 2016. Source: CDC and www.AIDSVU.org.

- **U.S. Incidence:** In 2016, 9 percent (3,480) of the 39,589 new diagnoses of HIV in the United States were attributed to IDU. Among new cases, 6.3 percent (2,530) were transmitted via IDU or male-to-male contact and IDU among men and 2.3 percent (950) were transmitted via IDU among women ([CDC](#)).
- **U.S. Prevalence:** In 2016, 991,447 Americans were living with a diagnosed HIV infection—a rate of 306.6 cases per 100,000 persons. Among males, 19.9 percent (150,466) contracted HIV from IDU or male-to-male contact and IDU while 21 percent (50,154) of females were living with HIV attributed to IDU ([CDC](#)).
- **State Incidence:** Of the new HIV cases in 2016, 314 occurred in Arkansas. Among males, 6.7 percent of new HIV cases were attributed to IDU or male-to-male contact and IDU. Among females, 4.3 percent of new cases were attributed to IDU (Figure 4) ([AIDSVU](#)).
- **State Prevalence:** In 2015, an estimated 5,308 persons were living with a diagnosed HIV infection in Arkansas—a rate of 214 cases per 100,000 persons. Of those, 15.5 percent of male cases were attributed to IDU or male-to-male contact and IDU. Among females, 18.1 percent were living with HIV attributed to IDU ([AIDSVU](#)).

Hepatitis C (HCV) Prevalence and HCV Diagnoses Attributed to Injection Drug Use¹

- **U.S. Incidence:** In 2016, there were an estimated 41,200 new cases of acute HCV² ([CDC](#)). Among cases reports that contain information about IDU, 68.6 percent indicated use of injection drugs ([CDC](#)).
- **U.S. Prevalence:** An estimated 2.3 million Americans are living with HCV based on 2013-2016 annual averages, a rate of 1,141.3 cases per 100,000 persons ([CDC](#)).

- **State Incidence:** In 2016, there were no reported cases of acute HCV in Arkansas ([CDC](#)). Recent data on the number and rate of acute and chronic cases and on how cases are transmitted in the state are unavailable.
- **State Prevalence:** In Arkansas, there are an estimated 22,200 persons living with Hepatitis C (2013-2016 annual average), a rate of 980 cases per 100,000 persons ([HepVu](#)).

[Find treatment in Arkansas \(SAMHSA\)](#)

Notes

1. Not all states collect or report data on the incidence or prevalence of Hepatitis C or on how Hepatitis C is transmitted. When available, the data will be included.
2. Actual acute cases estimated to be 13.9 times the number of reported cases in any year.