

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Georgia Opioid Summary

Last Updated April 2019

<https://www.drugabuse.gov>

Georgia Opioid Summary

Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths

In 2017, there were 1,014 overdose deaths involving opioids in Georgia—a rate of 9.7 deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to the national rate of 14.6 deaths per 100,000 persons.

The greatest increase in opioid deaths was seen in cases involving synthetic opioids (mainly fentanyl): a rise from 61 deaths in 2012 to 419 in 2017. Deaths involving heroin also increased in the same 5-year period: from 40 to 263 deaths. The highest number of deaths in 2017—568—involved prescription opioids (Figure 1).

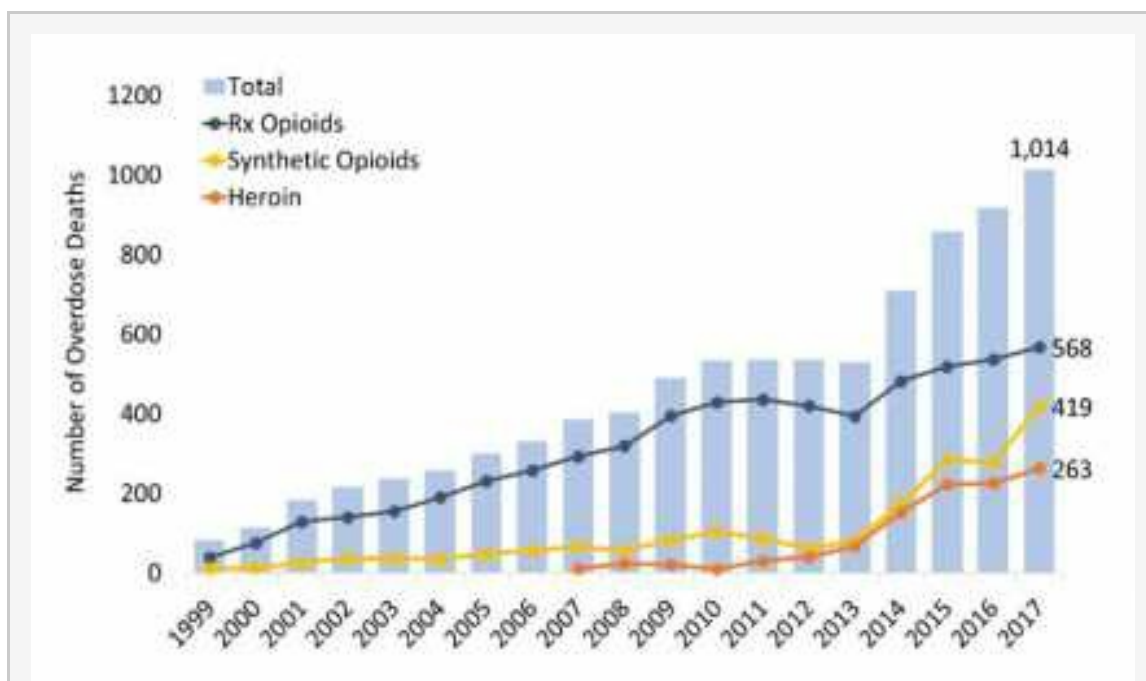


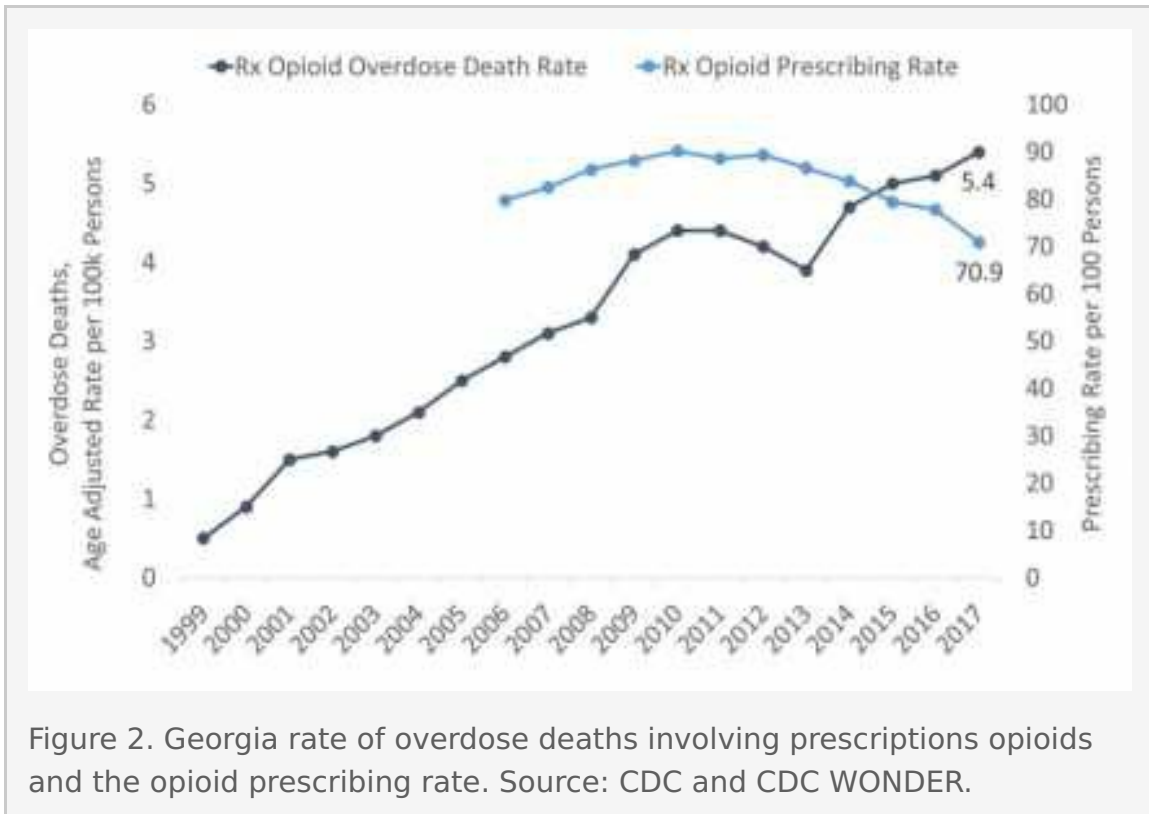
Figure 1. Number of overdose deaths involving opioids in the Georgia, by opioid category. Source: CDC WONDER.

Opioid Pain Reliever Prescriptions

In 2017, Georgia providers wrote 70.9 opioid prescriptions for every 100 persons (Figure 2), compared to the average U.S. rate of 58.7

prescriptions. This is the lowest rate in the state since 2006 when this data became available ([CDC](#)).

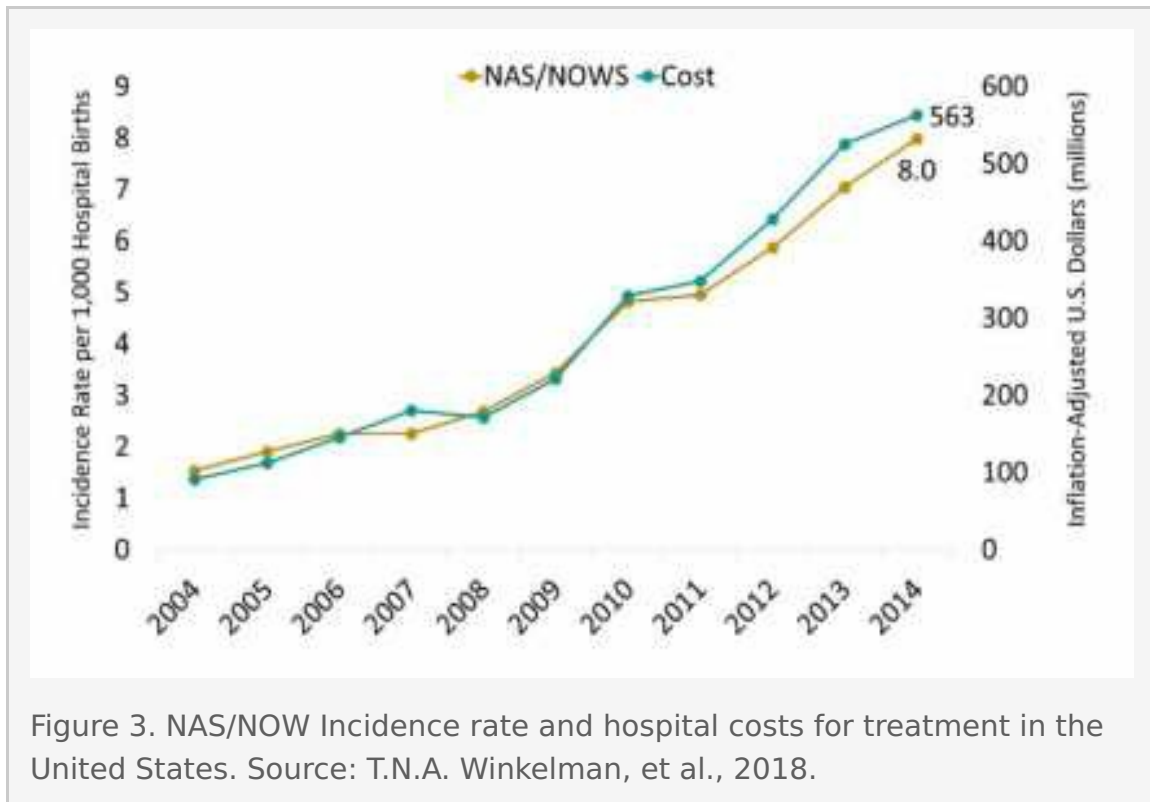
The overall rate of overdose deaths involving opioid prescriptions has risen significantly since 1999 despite a recent decline in 2013. Since then, it has increased from 3.9 deaths per 100,000 persons in 2013 to 5.4 deaths per 100,000 persons in 2017.



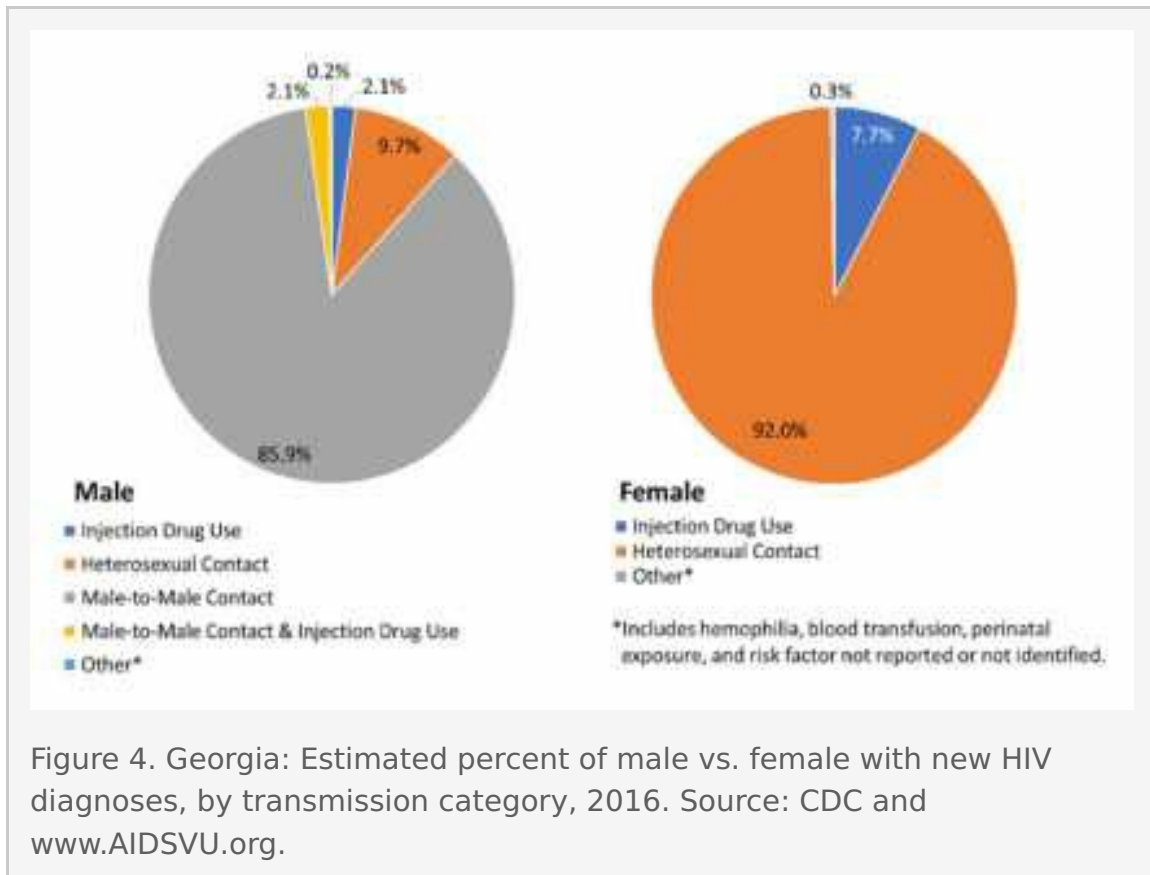
Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)

NAS or neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS) may occur when a pregnant woman uses drugs such as opioids during pregnancy. A recent national study revealed 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. This is the equivalent of one baby born with symptoms of NAS/NOWS every 15 minutes in the United States. During the same period, hospital costs for NAS/NOW births increased from \$91 million to \$563 million, after adjusting for inflation (Figure 3).

In 2016, there were 410 confirmed cases of NAS/NOWS from 47 of the 74 birthing facilities in Georgia. Opioids were confirmed in 20 percent of the cases ([Georgia Department of Public Health](#)).



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



- 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, 2,709 occurred in Georgia. Among males, 4.2 percent of new HIV cases were attributed to IDU or male-to-male contact and IDU. Among females, 7.7 percent of new HIV cases were attributed to IDU (Figure 4) ([AIDSVU](#)).
- State Prevalence:** In 2015, an estimated 49,463 persons were living with a diagnosed HIV infection in Georgia—a rate of 588 cases

per 100,000 persons. Of those, 12.3 percent of male cases were attributed to IDU or male-to-male contact and IDU. Among females, 15.3 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 case 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:** There were approximately 93 new cases of acute HCV (0.9 per 100,000 persons) reported in Georgia in 2016 ([CDC](#)).
- **State Prevalence:** In Georgia, there are an estimated 58,200 persons living with Hepatitis C (2013-2016 annual average), a rate of 770 cases per 100,000 persons ([HepVu](#)).

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

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 are estimated to be 13.9 times the number of reported cases in any year.