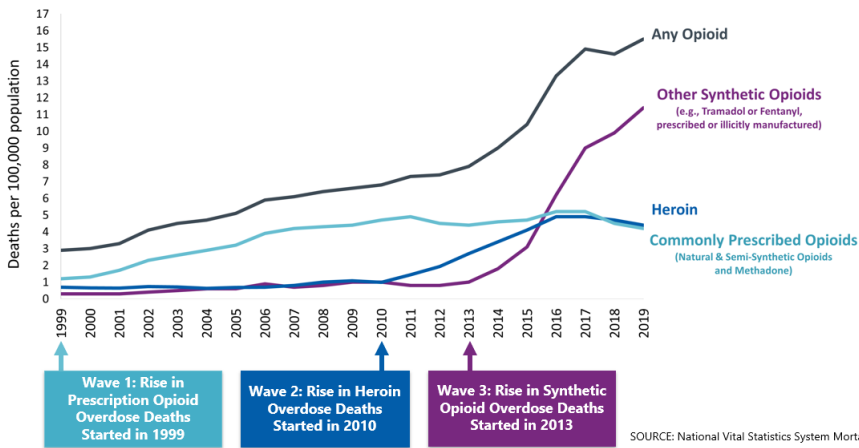


# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC AT A GLANCE

**From 1999-2020, the United States lost nearly 570,000 Americans to opioid overdose, including prescription and illicit opioids. The rise in opioid overdose deaths can be outlined in three distinct waves.**

Three Waves of the Rise in Opioid Overdose Deaths



## WAVE 1: 1999-2009

Increased prescribing of opioids in the 1990s, with overdose deaths involving prescription opioids (natural and semi-synthetic opioids and methadone) increasing since at least 1999.

## WAVE 2: 2010-2012

Rapid increases in overdose deaths involving heroin.

## WAVE 3: 2013-

Significant increases in overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids, particularly those involving illicitly manufactured fentanyl. The market for illicitly manufactured fentanyl continues to change, and it can be found in combination with heroin, counterfeit pills, and cocaine.

93,331 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in 2020, according to provisional data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The majority of these deaths, almost 75%, involved opioids.

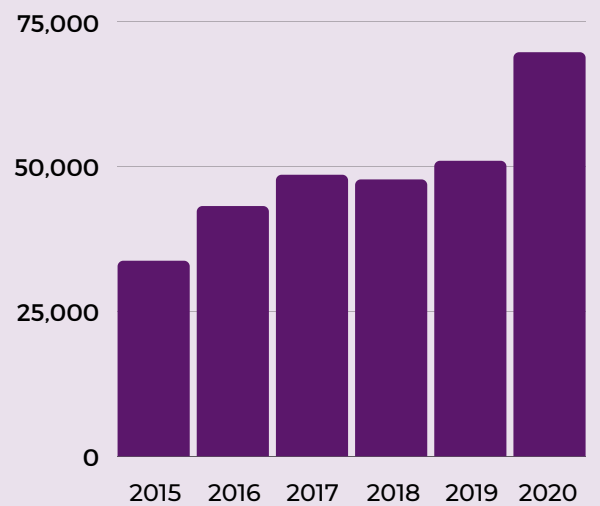
In 2020, overdoses involving opioids killed 69,710 people in the U.S. compared with 50,963 people in 2019.

Overdose deaths involving prescription opioids more than quadrupled from 1999 to 2019.

An average of 191 people died every day in the U.S. in 2020 from an opioid overdose, that is roughly 1 person every 7-8 minutes.

The annual overdose death rate involving opioids, including prescription opioids, heroin, and synthetic opioids (like fentanyl), has increased roughly 500% since 1999.

## NATIONAL DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS INVOLVING ANY OPIOID 2015-2020



\*2020 data are still preliminary and subject to change

### Sources:

Centers for Disease Control :  
[www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose](http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose)  
[www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm)

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[www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/opioids/opioid-overdose-crisis](http://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/opioids/opioid-overdose-crisis)  
[www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates](http://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates)

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