

## Intoxication Deaths in Maryland

The Vital Statistics Administration (VSA) of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) recently released the "Unintentional Drug- and Alcohol-Related Intoxication Deaths in Maryland Annual Report 2017". This report describes trends in intoxication deaths occurring in Maryland from 2007 through 2017. The methodology used in the report were developed with the assistance of the MDH Behavioral Health Administration, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and the Maryland Poison Center. Below are some of the key findings of the report:



- There were 2,282 drug- and alcohol-related intoxication deaths in Maryland in 2017, an increase of 9% over 2016 and reaching an all-time high.
- 88% of deaths were opioid-related.
- Fentanyl-related deaths increased by 42% between 2016 and 2017 (from 1,119 to 1,594) while the number of heroin deaths decreased by 11% (from 1,212 to 1,078).
- 78% of heroin-related deaths in 2017 were in combination with fentanyl, 32% with cocaine, 19% with alcohol and 15% with prescription opioids.
- Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County combined accounted for 61% of all heroin- and fentanyl-related deaths in Maryland.
- In 2017, there were 60 deaths related to carfentanil (a potent fentanyl analog) in Maryland; 33% of those deaths occurred in Baltimore City. Testing for carfentanil began in 2016.
- There were 413 prescription opioid-related deaths in 2017 compared to 418 in 2016. Deaths decreased in all age groups except for those 55 years and older.
- Cocaine-related deaths increased 49% from 2016 (464) to 2017 (691), and 213% since 2015 (221).
- 71% of cocaine-related deaths in 2017 occurred in combination with fentanyl and 50% with heroin.
- Benzodiazepines used in combination with opioids were the main reason for a 16% increase in benzodiazepine-related deaths from 2016-2017. Benzodiazepines in combination with fentanyl accounted for 51% of these deaths while 45% were in combination with prescription opioids and 39% with heroin.

### Did you know?

Data from the first quarter of 2018 does not look any better.

- The number of intoxication deaths from January through March 2018 in Maryland was 18% higher than in the same time frame in 2017.
- Opioid-related deaths in the first quarter 2018 increased by 20% over the first quarter 2017 (482 to 579).
- There were 500 fentanyl-related deaths January – March 2018 compared to 371 in the first quarter of 2017, a 35% increase.
- First quarter cocaine-related deaths increased 70% in 2018; 204 of the 229 deaths were in combination with opioids.

Read the full 2017 report at [https://bha.health.maryland.gov/OVERDOSE\\_PREVENTION/Documents/.Drug\\_Intox\\_Report\\_2017.pdf](https://bha.health.maryland.gov/OVERDOSE_PREVENTION/Documents/.Drug_Intox_Report_2017.pdf).



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