

# Quarterly Drug Overdose Surveillance Update | 3rd Quarter 2022

Overdose Response Program - Metro Public Health Department of Nashville/Davidson County

The objective of this report is to provide education and increase awareness in the Nashville community about the local drug overdose epidemic.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Notable Trends

#### Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses

**Number of Overdose Deaths:** During third quarter 2022, there were 160 suspected drug overdose deaths that occurred in the county, representing a 9.6% decrease compared to the same time period in 2021.

**Fentanyl:** Seventy-five percent of overdose-related toxicology reports in 2022 have detected the synthetic opioid fentanyl. This has been the main driver in the increased number of drug overdose injuries and deaths in Nashville. Other frequently detected substances among suspected overdose deaths in 2022 have been methamphetamine and cocaine.

**Demographics:** Seventy-five percent of suspected drug overdose deaths occurred among males. The largest percentage of deaths have occurred among 35-44 year olds (27%).

#### Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related Emergency Department (ED) Visits

**Number of Overdose-related ED Visits:** During third quarter 2022, there were 660 suspected drug overdose-related ED visits captured by syndromic surveillance (definition on page 3), representing a 12% increase when compared to third quarter 2021.

**Drug/Substance Category:** Sixty-seven percent of overdose-related ED visits in 2022 involved non-heroin opioids followed by heroin (26%) and stimulants (7%). This finding indicates a continued shift away from heroin and towards synthetic opioids.

**Demographics:** Approximately 7 out of 10 drug overdose-related ED visits in Nashville were among males. By age group, 32% of drug overdose-related ED visits occurred among individuals 25-34 years old.

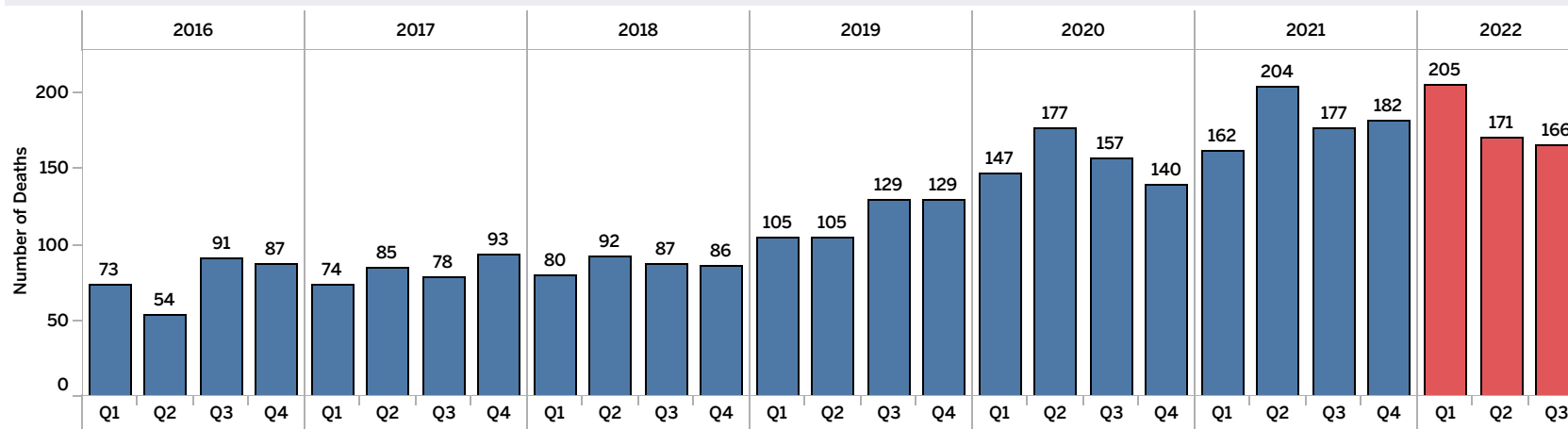
#### Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring Response by Nashville Fire Department Emergency Medical Services (NFD-EMS)

(EMS data unavailable beyond 1st quarter 2022)

**Number of Suspected Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response:** During first quarter 2022, there were 1,279 suspected drug overdoses requiring NFD-EMS response, representing a 1% decrease compared to first quarter 2021.

**Naloxone Administration:** Among suspected drug overdoses where naloxone was given, 30% of incidents during 1st quarter 2022 required multiple doses; during 4th quarter 2021, 34% of such incidents required multiple doses of naloxone.

Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses by Quarter, 2016-2022 - Davidson County, TN



Note: These data represent Davidson county deaths accessed from the Death Investigation and Decedent Information Database that are suspected to be drug overdose-related and will be updated and finalized in subsequent reports. Data pertaining to suspected drug overdose deaths are not currently finalized for January-September 2022.

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## Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses

2022 | July 1-September 30

### Notable Trends

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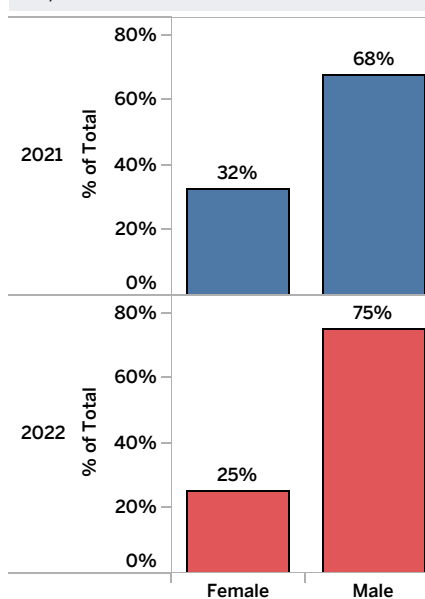
**Fentanyl:** Seventy-five percent of overdose-related toxicology reports in 2022 have detected fentanyl, a synthetic opioid pain reliever that has been the main driver in the increased number of drug overdose deaths in Nashville.

**Polysubstance Epidemic:** The most frequently detected substances in 2022 were fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine.

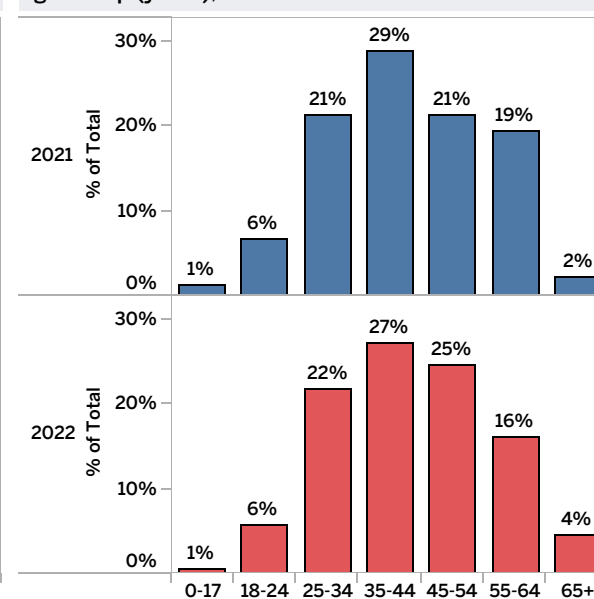
**Emerging Substances:** Fluorofentanyl, a fentanyl analog with reported potency similar to fentanyl, was first detected in Davidson County in the 3rd quarter of 2020. Xylazine, a drug used in veterinary medicine as a pain reliever and muscle relaxant, has been increasingly detected among suspected overdose deaths over the last 2 years.

**Demographics:** Seventy-five percent of suspected drug overdose deaths were among males while the majority of deaths have occurred among 35-44 year olds (27%) and white individuals (65%).

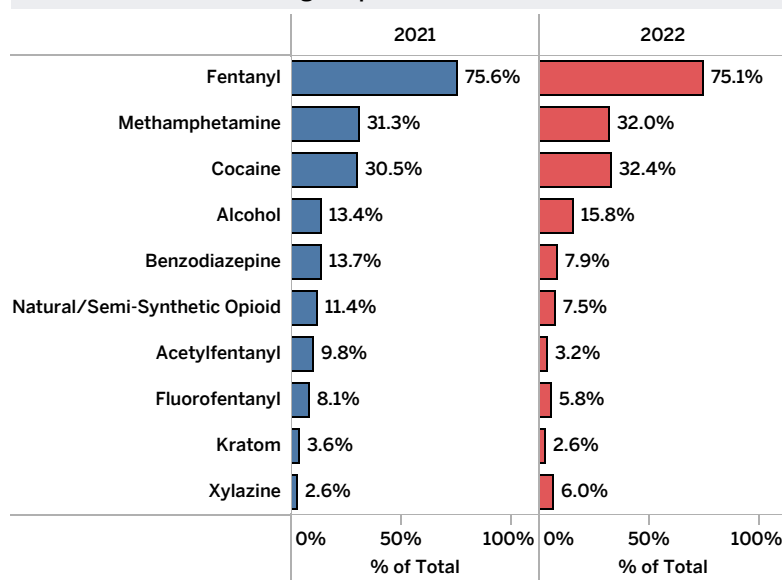
Sex, 2021-2022



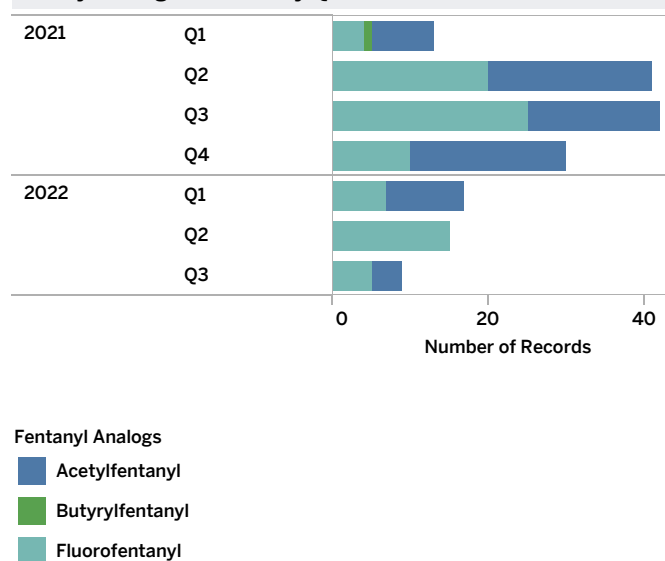
Age Group (years), 2021-2022



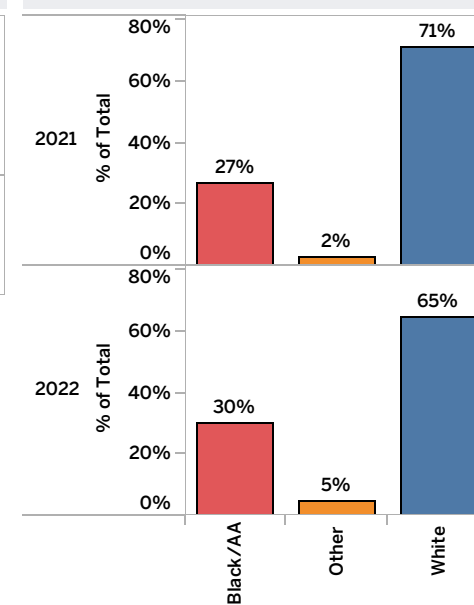
Substances Detected among Suspected Overdose Deaths, 2021-2022



Fentanyl Analog Detection by Quarter, 2021-2022



Race, 2021-2022



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## Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related ED Visits

2022 | July 1-September 30

### Notable Trends

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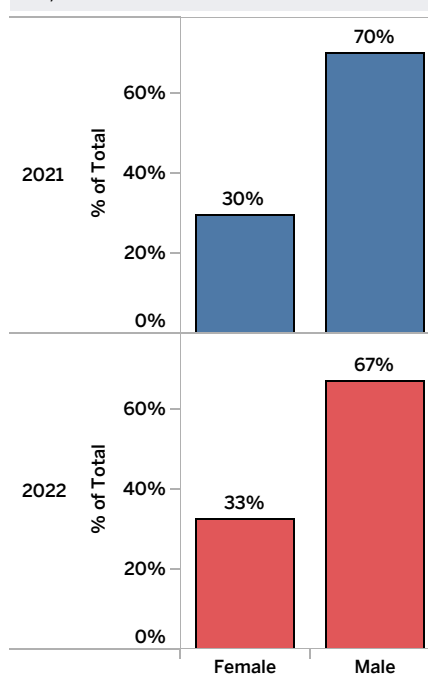
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**Demographics:** Approximately 7 out of 10 drug overdose-related ED visits in Nashville were among males. By age group, 32% of drug overdose-related ED visits occurred among individuals 25-34 years old. Among race groups, the majority of death werea among White individuals at 61% followed by Black individuals 25%.

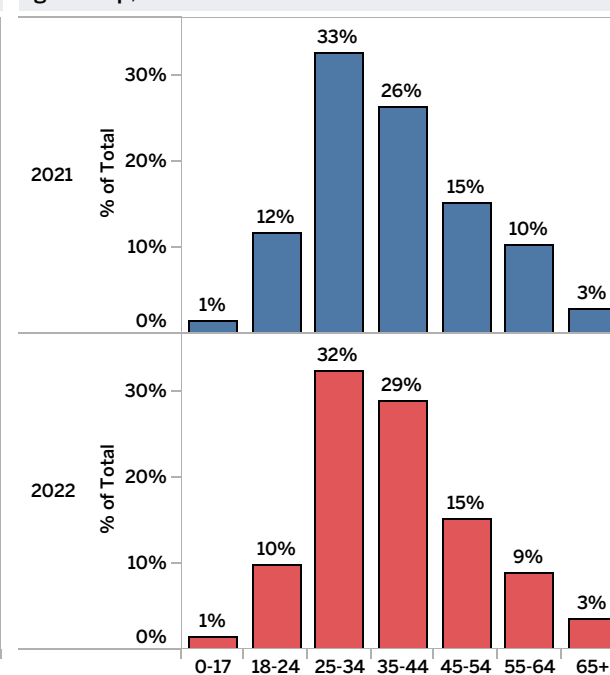
### What is Syndromic Surveillance?

Data collected in syndromic surveillance consists of de-identified information from various health care facilities regarding chief complaints, diagnosis codes, and patient characteristics. These data are reported either to state and local health departments or Health Information Exchanges, which then contribute data to the national syndromic surveillance platform for assistance in identifying early trends in diseases and conditions.

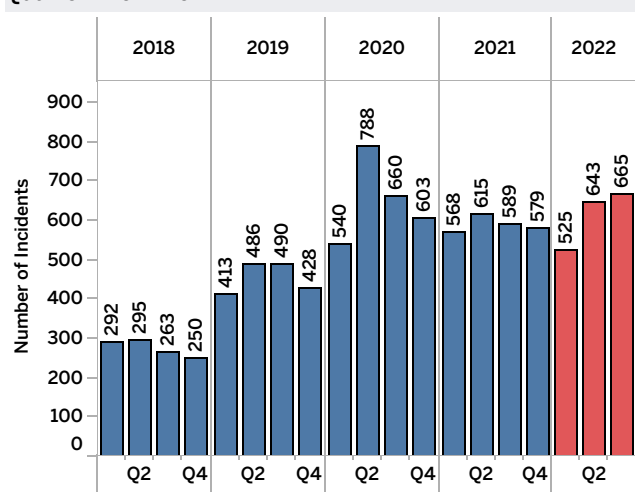
Sex, 2021-2022



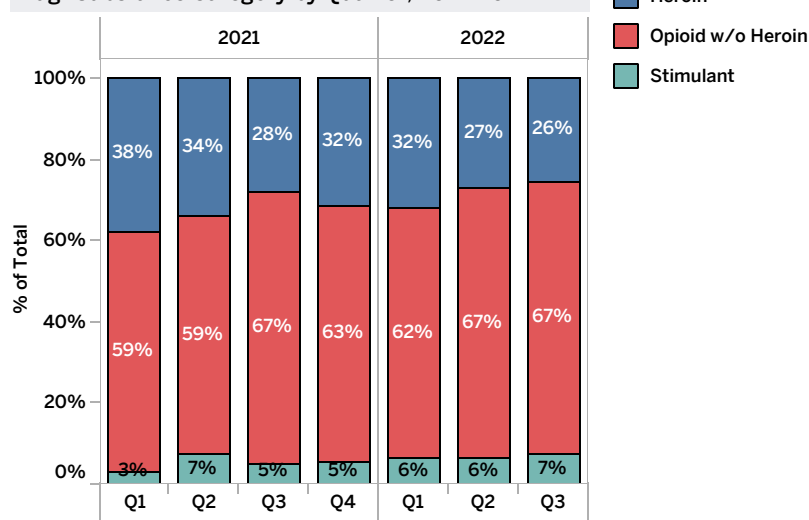
Age Group, 2021-2022



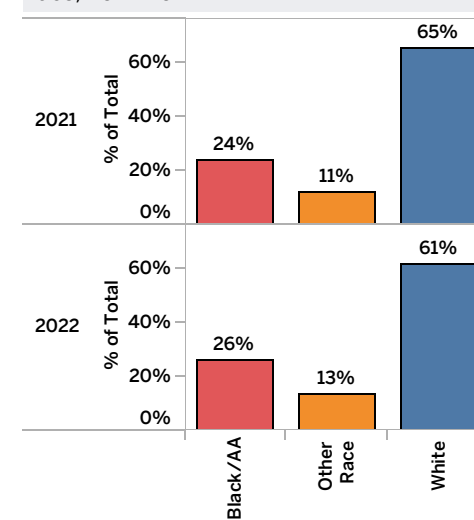
Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related ED Visits by Quarter - 2017-2022



Drug/Substance Category by Quarter, 2021-2022



Race, 2021-2022



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## Resources for the Public

### Community Overdose Response Team

For those seeking treatment for drug addiction, the Community Overdose Response Team (CORT) can help. CORT is a free and confidential resource to help find drug and alcohol treatment for individuals who are at risk of an overdose. The service is offered free of charge regardless of health insurance status. The team works with an individual to determine the appropriate level of care (e.g., detox, residential, or outpatient treatment, etc.).

To make a referral or learn more about this resource for our community, call CORT at 615-687-1701.

### Tennessee REDLINE

The purpose of the Tennessee REDLINE is to provide accurate, up-to-date alcohol, drug, problem gambling, and other addiction information and referrals to all citizens of Tennessee at their request even if you do not have health insurance.

- Phone: 1.800.889.9789 (toll free 24 hours/7 days)
- Website: <https://www.tn.gov/opioids/treatment/how-to-get-help.html>

### Additional Information

#### Naloxone Training

- STARS Nashville, Call 615-393-6980 or visit <https://starsnashville.org/rops/>.
- Red Cross visit <https://www.redcross.org/>

#### Overdose Signs

- Person is not responsive
- Fingertips or lips turn blue or grey
- Breathing is slow, shallow, or has stopped
- Person is gurgling or making snoring noises

#### What can you do if you see an opioid overdose?

- Call 911
- If you have naloxone, give the person naloxone and perform rescue breathing
- If no response after 2-3 minutes, give a second dose of naloxone
- Do not leave the person alone (help will arrive)
- If the person starts to breathe or becomes more alert, lay the person in the recovery position: put the person slightly on the left side so that their body is supported by a bent knee with their face turned to the side and bottom arm reaching out to stabilize the position

### SPIKE Auto Text Program

Metro Public Health Department is collaborating with Partnership to End Addiction to implement the SPIKE Auto Text Program in Davidson County. The program will alert you when spikes in drug overdoses occur locally.

Text SPIKE to 855-9-OD-KNOW (855-963-5669) and follow the steps to get messages on your phone when overdose spikes occur. This service is FREE. You can learn more at <https://drugfree.org/spike/>.

### Overdose Response Program – Drug Overdose Information

- Website: <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/health/drug-overdose-information>
- Contains various resources in English, Spanish, and Arabic.



Partnership to End Addiction is working with organizations in your community to alert you when spikes in drug overdoses occur locally. This knowledge can help you take action to engage and protect your loved ones struggling with addiction.

**Why it matters:** Spike alerts can prompt families and community members to:

- 1 Have discussions about seeking treatment and/or using substances more safely
- 2 Protect people you care about by getting naloxone and learning how to use it
- 3 Talk to friends or loved ones who are not using substances about the risks of use
- 4 Advocate for and support efforts in your community to prevent overdoses

**Text SPIKE to 855-9-OD-KNOW (855-963-5669)**

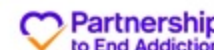
and follow the steps to get messages on your phone when overdose spikes occur.

**How it works:** Health and law enforcement officials can release a "spike alert" to the media in response to a pattern of drug overdoses within a community. Partnership to End Addiction's SPIKE Alerts by Text program informs you when these alerts are issued.



Learn more: [drugfree.org/spike](https://drugfree.org/spike) or scan QR code to sign up now

Partnership to End Addiction is a nonprofit working to transform how our nation addresses addiction. Learn more at [drugfree.org](https://drugfree.org).



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## Footnotes and Supplemental Information

**\*\*If you have information on unusual overdose activity, please contact the Overdose Response Program\*\***

**Opioid.Response@nashville.gov | 615-340-0498**

### Technical Notes

There may be additional fatal/nonfatal drug overdoses reported over this time period in subsequent reports as incidents that occurred between July-September 2022 are not yet finalized. Percent change where the cumulative total is less than 20 were not included due to the instability of calculations.

### Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses

- Suspected fatal drug overdose data were accessed from the Death Investigation and Decedent Information (DIDI) database and ranged from 0/01/2016-09/30/2022. **Data represent deaths accessed from DIDI that are suspected to be drug overdose-related. Further, these deaths have occurred within Davidson County; cases are included in this total regardless of resident status.** This particular mortality indicator is utilized in order to demonstrate the overall burden on first response/healthcare/forensic science efforts involved in addition to the overall magnitude of the overdose epidemic. As such, counts reported for this metric will likely differ from overdose death counts provided by other agencies which typically report deaths among county residents.

### Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related ED Visits

- Nonfatal drug overdose data were extracted from ESSENCE-TN and ranged from 01/01/2017-09/30/2022.
- Nonfatal drug overdose ED visits were captured by syndromic surveillance (ESSENCE-TN) by the following hospitals:
  - Nashville General Hospital, Saint Thomas Midtown Hospital, Saint Thomas West Hospital, TriStar Centennial Medical Center, TriStar Skyline Medical Center, TriStar Southern Hills Medical Center, TriStar Summit Medical Center, and Vanderbilt University Medical Center.
- Updated query language was utilized to capture nonfatal drug overdoses reported to ESSENCE in August 2020. This query was retroactively applied to previous time periods.
- ICD-10-CM diagnosis injury codes, in addition to chief complaint keyword queries, were used to capture nonfatal drug overdoses:
  - Opioid: T40.0, F11.1, F11.2, F11.9
  - Heroin: T40.1
  - Other opioid: T40.2
  - Methadone: T40.3
  - Other synthetic narcotic: T40.4
  - Cocaine: T40.5
  - Other/unspecified narcotic: T40.6
  - Amphetamine: T43.62
- Drug Category (page 3)
  - Opioids excluding Heroin: T40.0, T40.2-T40.4, T40.6, F11.1, F11.2, F11.9
  - Heroin: T40.1
  - Stimulant: T40.5, T43.62

### Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response - (EMS data unavailable beyond 1st quarter 2022)

- Suspected drug overdose data were provided by the Nashville Fire Department EMS Database and ranged from 01/01/2016-03/31/2022.