



# Kansas

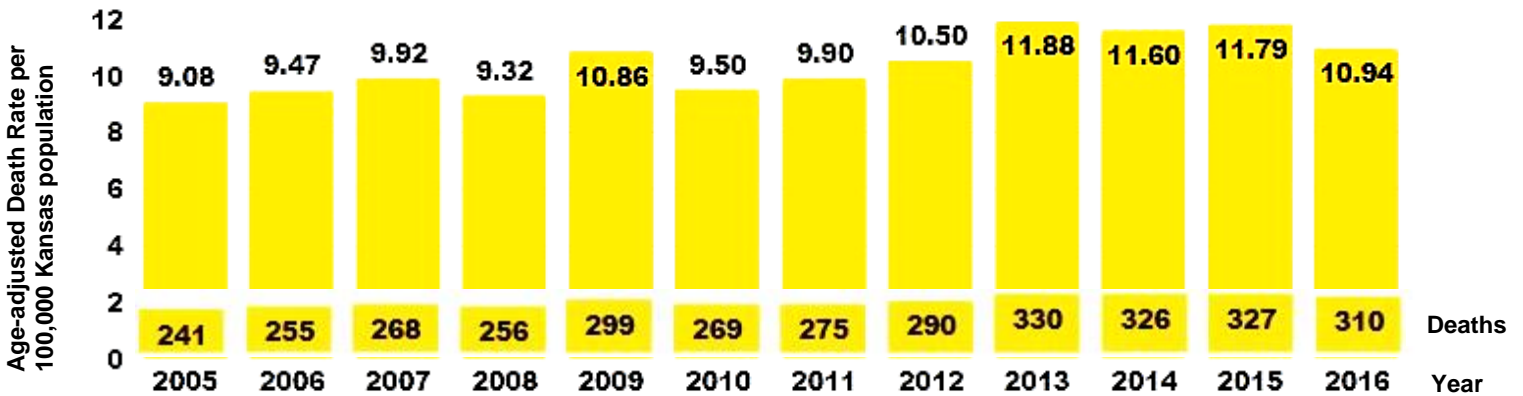
## Trends in Drug Poisoning Deaths

### Special Emphasis Report: Drug Poisoning Deaths, 2005-2016

#### A Public Health Crisis Continues – Emerging Trends: Methamphetamine

Drug poisoning remains a significant cause of injury deaths in Kansas, with 310 deaths in 2016 with a drug poisoning underlying cause of death. However, drug poisoning death rates in Kansas fell by 8% in 2016 compared to 2015 (Rate Ratio: 0.92, 99% F-Ratio Confidence Limit: 0.75—1.15). A 41% decline in methadone poisoning deaths from 2012 to 2016 may have accounted for this change. However, an increase in psychostimulant, heroin, and benzodiazepine poisonings have kept drug poisoning deaths above 300 deaths in 2016 (see page 2).

**Figure 1.** Age-adjusted drug poisoning death rates and total death counts by Year, Kansas residents, 2005-2016\*.



\*Data Sources: 2005-2016 Kansas Vital Statistics, Bureau of Epidemiology and Public Health Informatics. Drug poisoning death rates were computed based on the underlying cause of death and age-adjusted using the 2016 Vintage single-year of age bridged-race population estimates for years 2010 to 2016 and the 2000-2009 revised intercensal bridged-race population estimates for years 2005-2009. The U.S. 2000 standard population was used as a reference population for comparable rates between years and to the rates reported by the National Center for Health Statistics. Rate ratio confidence intervals were calculated based on the approximate F-ratios proposed by Fay (1999), for more information: Fay MP. Approximate confidence intervals for rate ratios from directly standardized rates with sparse data. Communications in Statistics-Theory and Methods. 1999 Jan 1;28(9):2141-60.

#### 8 out of 10 Drug Poisonings are caused by Pharmaceutical or Illicit Drugs

From 2012 to 2016, there was a total of 1,583 drug poisoning deaths (Figure 1). Almost 85% (Table 1) of these deaths involved a specific pharmaceutical opioid (e.g., Oxycodone, Methadone, Fentanyl, Hydrocodone, etc.), a Methamphetamine/Amphetamine drug, or a Benzodiazepine. The number of drug poisoning deaths with only one drug was 1,256 (73% of all drug poisonings).

**Table 1.** Drug Poisoning Deaths by Gender, Age, and Type of Drug poisoning, Kansas residents, 2012-2016\*\*.

| Deaths and Percent of Deaths by Age and Type of Drug | Male Deaths      | Female Deaths    | Total Deaths     |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>15-34 years</b>                                   | <b>316 (74%)</b> | <b>111 (26%)</b> | <b>427 (32%)</b> |
| Pharmaceutical Opioids                               | 141 (69%)        | 62 (31%)         | 203 (48%)        |
| Benzodiazepines                                      | 26 (79%)         | 7 (21%)          | 33 (8%)          |
| Methamphetamines/Amphetamines                        | 85 (74%)         | 30 (26%)         | 115 (27%)        |
| <b>35-54 years</b>                                   | <b>339 (53%)</b> | <b>300 (47%)</b> | <b>639 (48%)</b> |
| Pharmaceutical Opioids                               | 135 (46%)        | 161 (54%)        | 296 (46%)        |
| Benzodiazepines                                      | 26 (38%)         | 42 (62%)         | 68 (11%)         |
| Methamphetamines/Amphetamines                        | 122 (73%)        | 45 (27%)         | 167 (26%)        |
| <b>All Age Groups and All Drugs</b>                  | <b>808 (61%)</b> | <b>526 (39%)</b> | <b>1,334</b>     |



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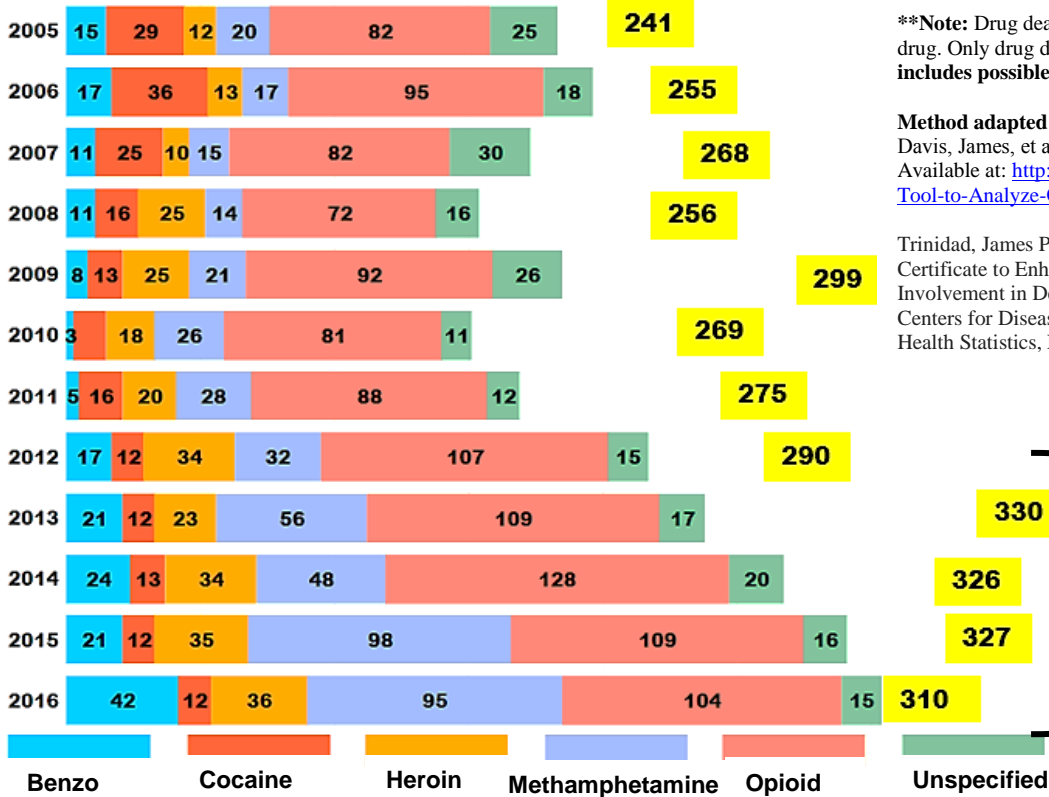
## Trends in Drug Poisoning Deaths

### Special Emphasis Report: Drug Poisoning Deaths, 2005-2016

**Pharmaceutical opioids remain a leading cause of drug poisoning deaths.**

**Methamphetamine, Benzodiazepines, and heroin continue to increase as causes of drug poisoning deaths.**

**Figure 2.** Drug Poisoning Deaths with Mentions of Selected Drugs, 2005-2009 and 2011-2016, Kansas residents.\*\*



\*\*Note: Drug deaths were specified based on specific mentions of a drug. Only drug deaths with > 5 counts are shown. **Heroin death includes possible heroin, such as morphine mentioned deaths.**

**Method adapted from:**  
Davis, James, et al. "Epi Tool to Analyze Overdose Death Data." Available at: <http://www.cste.org/blogpost/1084057/211072/Epi-Tool-to-Analyze-Overdose-Death-Data>.

Trinidad, James P., et al. "Using Literal Text From the Death Certificate to Enhance Mortality Statistics: Characterizing Drug Involvement in Deaths." National vital statistics reports: from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System 65.9 (2016): 1-15.

A decrease in deaths from methadone occurred during this period probably due to changes in methadone management practices.

**For more details:** Paul M. Methadone prescribing and overdose and the association with medicaid preferred drug list policies—United States, 2007–2014. MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. 2017;66.

## Existing Work in Kansas to Address Drug Poisoning Deaths

- The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Data-Driven Prevention Initiative (DDPI) to implement a statewide collaborative effort to reduce the misuse, abuse, dependence, and poisoning by drugs. This work includes:
  - Developing a state plan to prevent negative health outcomes associated with using prescription drugs.
  - Collaborating with the Kansas Board of Pharmacy to enhance the Kansas Tracking and Reporting of Controlled Substances (K-TRACS).
- The University of Kansas Hospital’s Poison Control Center is a 24-hour toll free hotline available throughout the state, **1-800-222-1222**. Critical care nurses, medical doctors nationally certified in poisoning management, and pharmacists are available to answer questions related to drug use.
- The Kansas Tracking and Reporting of Controlled Substances (K-TRACS) operated by the Kansas Board of Pharmacy is the state’s prescription drug monitoring program aimed at reducing inappropriate prescribing behavior and drug abuse. Medical providers and pharmacists are among those authorized to access and use the data to reduce harms related to prescription drug use.

**KANSAS INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM**

<http://www.kdheks.gov/idp/index.html>

Released August, 2017