

Nonfatal Overdose Trends by Sex

May 2025

Data on nonfatal overdoses is important to provide a better understanding of overdoses in Vermont, which helps inform Vermont’s overdose prevention and response strategies. Nationally, nonfatal opioid and non-opioid drug overdoses happen at different rates.^{1,2,3} These trends are apparent in nonfatal accidental overdose-related emergency department (ED) visits in Vermont as well. Exploring trends of opioid and non-opioid nonfatal overdoses by sex supports prevention and harm reduction work across the state.

In this brief, nonfatal overdoses are defined as suspected poisonings from non-suicide-related consumption or use of a drug.⁴

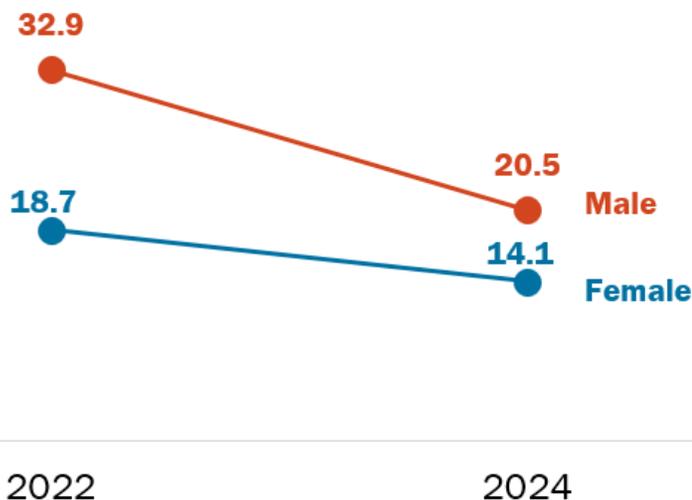
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Nonfatal Opioid Overdoses

In Vermont, nonfatal opioid-related overdoses for both sexes decreased from 2022 to 2024, following national trends. The amount of decrease, however, was not equal by sex.⁴

Opioid overdose rates decreased more for males than for females. Both decreases are statistically significant. Males had statistically higher rates than females in both years.

Nonfatal Opioid Overdoses per 10,000 ED Visits



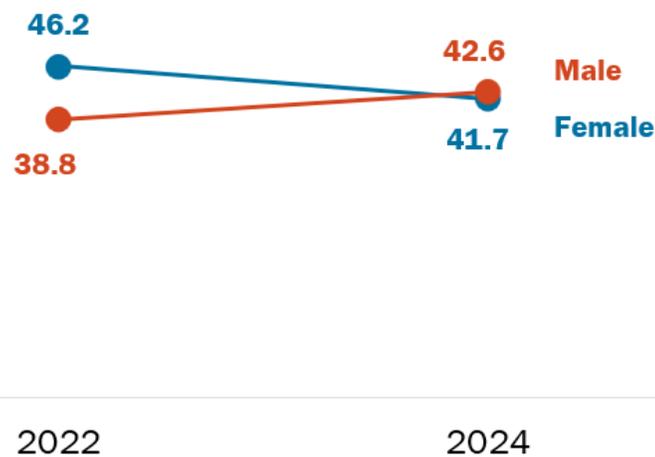
Source: Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE), 2022-2024

Nonfatal Non-Opioid Overdoses

[While opioids are responsible for most overdose deaths in VT](#), there are more ED visits for nonfatal non-opioid overdoses than nonfatal opioid overdoses. Non-opioid drugs include illicit stimulants, cannabis, non-opioid prescription medications, and over-the-counter medications.

Females experienced statistically higher rates of non-opioid overdoses than **males** in 2022. That gap closed in 2024.

Nonfatal Non-Opioid Overdoses per 10,000 ED Visits



Source: Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE), 2022-2024.

Data notes

Statistical significance was determined at the 95% confidence level.

Sex was categorized as male and female because that is how it is collected in the ED data provided to the Health Department. Nonfatal opioid overdoses are defined as suspected unintentional poisoning from use or consumption of an opioid drug, while nonfatal non-opioid overdoses are suspected unintentional poisonings from use or consumption of all other drugs, such as stimulant drugs, cannabis, over-the-counter medication, and non-opioid prescription medication.

Suspected nonfatal overdose-related ED visits are identified using the CDC nonfatal overdose syndrome definition. These definitions use multiple fields in ED data, such as chief complaint and diagnostic coding for clinical diagnosis and insurance billing.⁴

References

- 1 [Nonfatal Drug and Polydrug Overdoses Treated in Emergency Departments – 29 States, 2018–2019 | MMWR](#)
- 2 [Incidence and Characteristics of Nonfatal Opioid Overdose Among Youths Aged 11 to 24 Years by Sex | Health Disparities | JAMA Network Open | JAMA Network](#)
- 3 [Hospitalizations for Poisoning by Prescription Opioids, Sedatives, and Tranquilizers - American Journal of Preventive Medicine](#)
- 4 [DOSE Dashboard: Nonfatal Overdose Syndromic Surveillance Data | Overdose Prevention | CDC](#)