



# Drug Overdoses

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# Drug overdoses

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There were 3,084 drug overdose deaths in Michigan in 2021. This was a 13% increase over the 2020 deaths.

There has been an 18x rate increase in Opioid Overdose Deaths since 1999 in MI.

There were 1,911 deaths from Synthetic Narcotic Overdoses (including Fentanyl) in 2020.

Overdose deaths remain a leading cause of injury-related death in the United States. The majority of overdose deaths involve opioids.



# Opioids

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Opioids are a class of drugs derived from the opium poppy plant used for their painkilling effects.

These substances are highly addictive and include drugs prescribed by medical professionals as well as illicit substances such as heroin.

Commonly prescribed opioids include Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, Morphine and Codeine.

Prolonged use of opioids leads to higher tolerance and physical dependence.

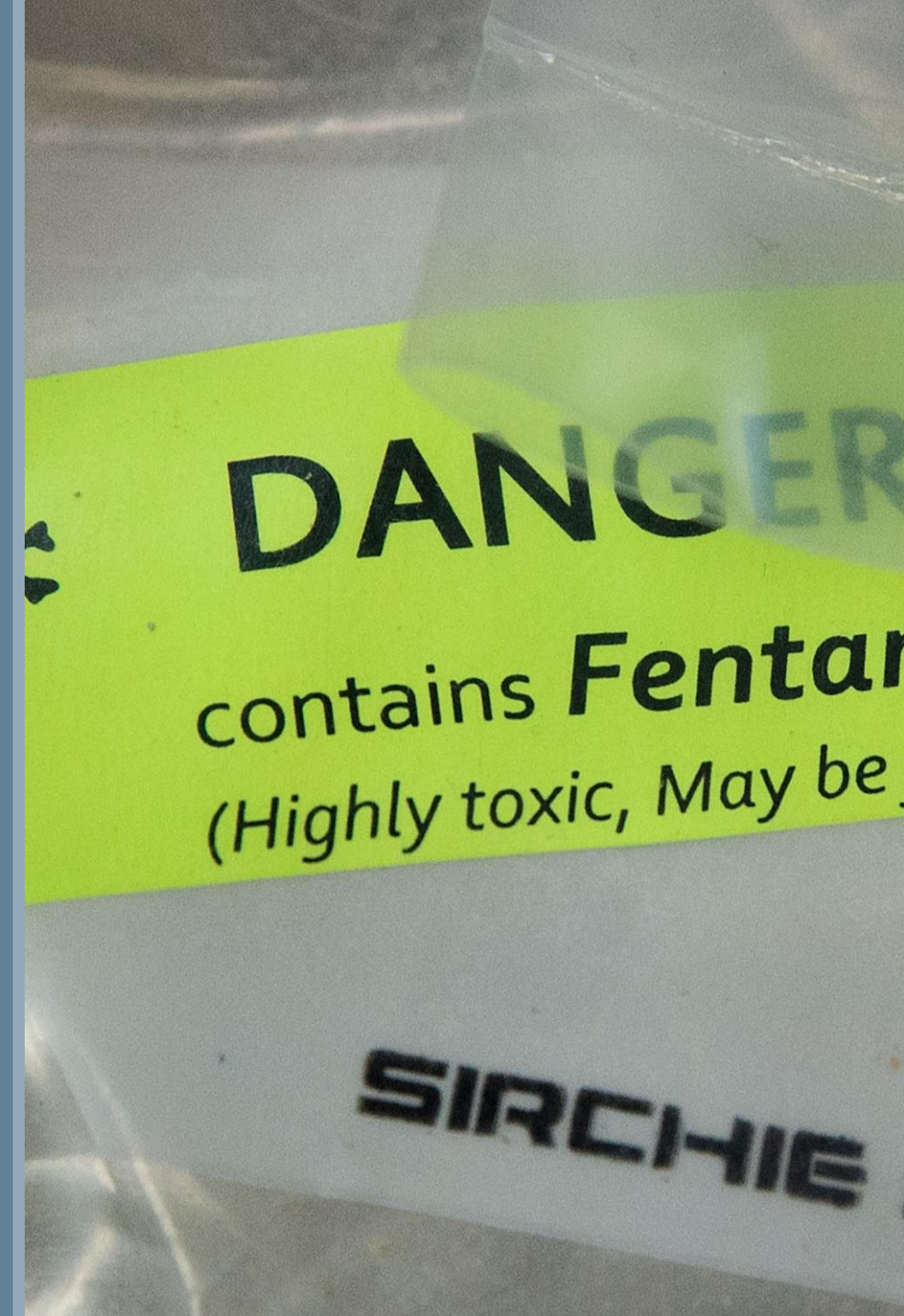



# Polydrug Use & Fentanyl Contamination

Polydrug use happens when a person is exposed to more than one drug, with or without their knowledge.

Illegally made fentanyl (IMF)/fentanyl analogs are being mixed into fake opioid pills, heroin and other drugs.

In 2021, more than 75% of all overdose deaths in the United States involved opioids, and most of these deaths specifically involved synthetic opioids such as IMFs.





# Recognizing an Opioid Overdose

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- Face is extremely pale and/or feels clammy to the touch.
- Body goes limp.
- Fingernails or lips have a purple or blue color.
- They start vomiting or making gurgling noises.
- They cannot be awakened or are unable to speak.
- Their breathing or heartbeat slows or stops.
- Pinpoint pupils.

# Risk Factors/Groups

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Younger (18-25) or  
Older adults (65  
years and older)

Mental Health  
Disorders  
(Depression,  
Anxiety, PTSD)

History of alcohol  
or substance abuse

Respiratory  
conditions (sleep  
apnea, asthma,  
COPD)

Wasting syndrome  
(Cachexia)

Impaired energy or  
strength  
(debilitated  
patients)



# Treatment

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- Naloxone – quickly reverses an overdose by blocking the effects of opioids. It can restore normal breathing within 2 to 3 minutes in a person whose breath has slowed, or stopped, as a result of opioid overdose.
- Good Samaritan laws are in place in most states to protect those who are overdosing and anyone assisting them in an emergency from arrest, charges, or a combination of these.
  - Nasal spray
  - Injectable

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[CDC Drug Overdose Basics](#)

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[MDHHS – Opioid Resources](#)

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Sources