



# Louisiana's Opioid Epidemic Information Sheet

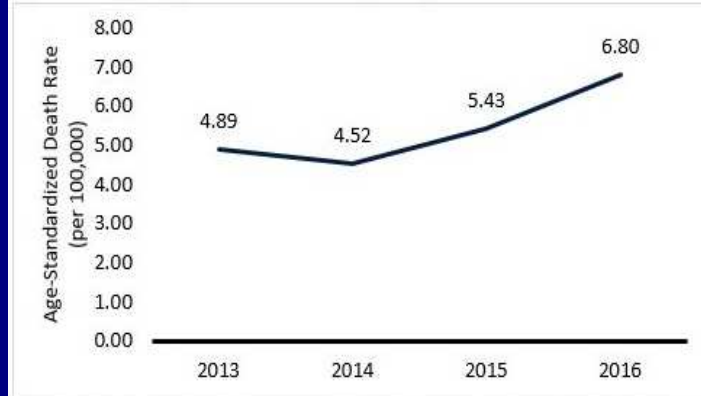
March 2018

**In 2016, 1 Louisiana resident died every 29 hours from an opioid related overdose.**

## Opioids are:

- Narcotic drugs that act on the nervous system to relieve pain (this includes illegal drugs and legal drugs by prescription only)
- Highly addictive— Your body can become dependent on opioids within ONE prescription cycle
- Deadly— Opioids can stop breathing and can stop the heart from beating
- A risk for everyone— Opioids affect all age groups, genders, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic groups

Age-Standardized opioid-related deaths per 100,000 Louisiana residents—Louisiana, 2013-2016



Produced by Louisiana Department of Health, Bureau of Health Informatics

Data source: Louisiana Electronic Event Registration System, Bureau of Vital Records and Statistics

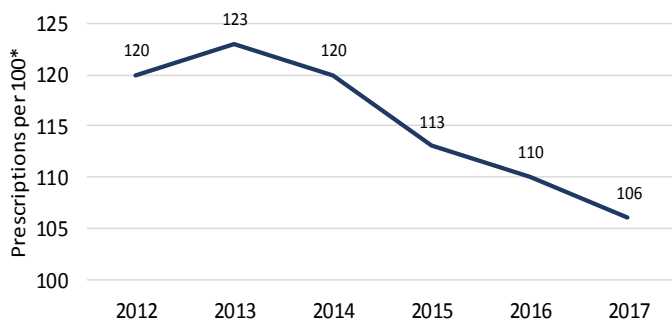
US Census Bureau Population Estimates & 2000 US Standard Population

## The Facts



- ☒ Legal opioid drugs given/prescribed by your doctor such as morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Lortab®), fentanyl patches (Duragesic®), hydromorphone (Dilaudid®), oxymorphone (Opana®), and buprenorphine (Suboxone®) are equally as dangerous as illegal opioids.
- ☒ Illicit opioids include heroin, powder fentanyl and several other lethal fentanyl-related drugs. Drug dealers are making deadly mixtures of these drugs with and without heroin. Several of these drugs have also been found in counterfeit pharmaceutical tablets!
- ☒ Prescription drugs are illegal to possess or consume unless prescribed to you!
- ☒ Among those people who misused prescription pain relievers in the past year, more than 50% got them from friends or relatives, 40% from health care providers, 10% from other sources. (SAMSHA 2015 Natl. Survey on Drug Use and Health)
- ☒ Opioid abuse costs Louisiana tax payers \$296 MILLION each year in healthcare costs. (Matrix Global Advisors, LLC (2014) Health Care Costs from Opioid Abuse: A State by State Analysis)

Total opioid prescriptions per 100 Louisiana residents- 2012-2017



\*Note the graph as been magnified to 100-125 to better display the trend

According to the CDC, in 2016, Louisiana had the 5th highest prescription-per-capita rate in the US! In 2013, Louisiana peaked with 123 opioid prescriptions per 100 residents. Since then, that number has declined to 106 per 100 residents. However, these stats do not reflect the number of those already dependent or addicted to these drugs that may now seek their opioid drugs from illegal sources like heroin. The PMP also reported that the age group receiving the most prescriptions was 55 years old and older.

(Chart produced by LA Dept. of Health, Bureau of Health Informatics. Data source: LA Board of Pharmacy, Prescription Monitoring Program, US Census Bureau Population Estimates)

For more data, visit [www.lah.gov/opioids](http://www.lah.gov/opioids)



- Ask your doctor to prescribe other pain management options such as: non-narcotic pain medicines, physical therapy, exercise, cognitive behavioral therapy, or other pain relieving therapies.
- If opioid pain medications are necessary:
  - You can ask your pharmacist to partially fill your opioid prescription.
  - Take them **ONLY** as prescribed and for the shortest time possible.
  - Never mix opioids with alcohol, sleeping pills, or any illicit substance.
- Keep all medications in a safe place and **keep opioids locked up!**
- Discard all unused, not-needed, and expired medications at drug drop off boxes. For a list of permanent drop boxes in your area, visit [www.endtheepidemicla.org](http://www.endtheepidemicla.org). For info on the next national drug take back day, visit [www.deadiversions.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/](http://www.deadiversions.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/).

## In Case of an Overdose

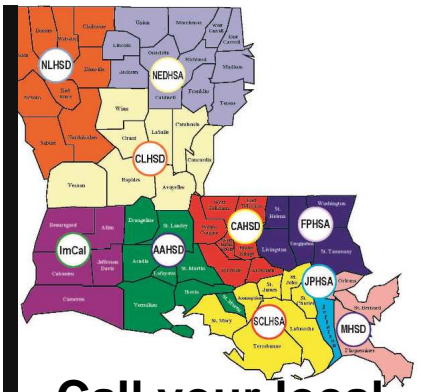
- Learn the signs of an overdose and teach your family and friends how to recognize and respond to an overdose.
- Call 911 immediately to report an overdose. Louisiana's "Good Samaritan Law" protects you from arrest or criminal charges if you report an overdose.
- Have naloxone on hand and administer naloxone to reverse the overdose.
- 911 must be called when naloxone is administered because the victim may need additional doses.

## What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is an easy-to-use, fast-acting medicine that reverses the deadly effect of opioids during an overdose. Anyone can get naloxone without a prescription at any Louisiana pharmacy. You should keep naloxone on hand in case someone you know overdoses on opioids. Naloxone is also available to first responders: law enforcement, firefighters, EMS, and other rescuers.

Naloxone is administered through a nasal spray, auto-injector, or simple shot. Naloxone will not harm someone who has no opioids in their system and their medical situation is due to something other than an opioid overdose. Naloxone will not help someone overdosing on cocaine, methamphetamine or other non-opioid drugs.

Developed by members of the State Epidemiology Workgroup, a subcommittee of the Drug Policy Board. Contact 225-219-9479 for more information.



## Call your local Human Services Authorities for help:

Alexandria Area  
(318) 487-5191

Baton Rouge Area  
(225) 925-1906

Hammond Area  
(985) 543-4333

Houma/Thibodaux Area  
(985) 858-2931

Jefferson Parish  
(504) 838-5257

Lafayette Area  
(337) 262-4190

Lake Charles Area  
(866) 698-5304

Monroe Area  
(800) 256-2522

New Orleans Area  
(504) 568-3130

Shreveport Area  
(318) 676-5111