

American Indian & Alaska Native Opioid Overdose Mortality DATA BRIEF



Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board

www.npaihb.org/idea-nw

503.228.4185 ▪ ideanw@npaihb.org

2121 SW Broadway, Suite 300 ▪ Portland, OR 97201



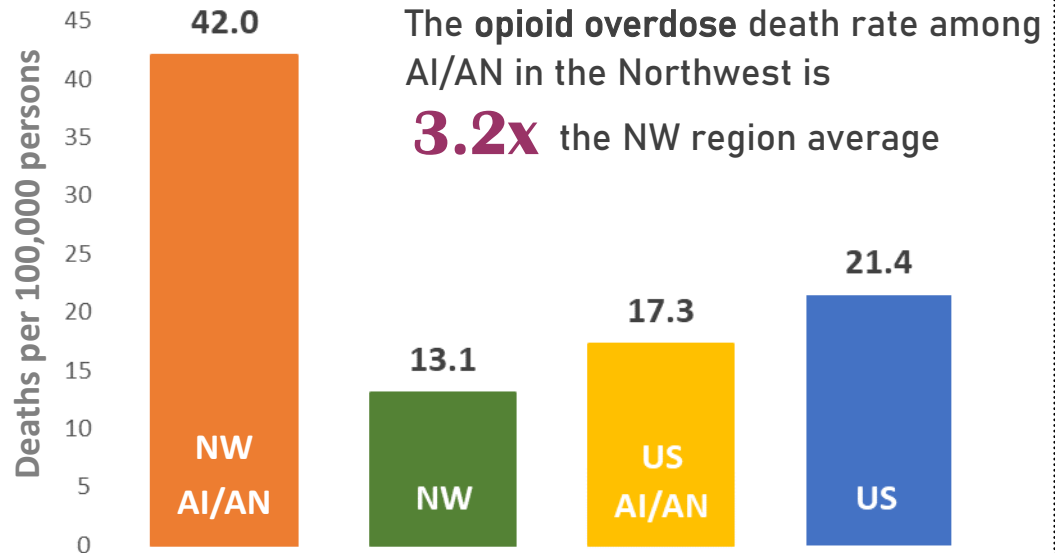
This report summarizes opioid overdose mortality data for American Indian & Alaska Native (AI/AN) people in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho (the NW region). Comparisons are made to the NW region overall, the US, and all AI/AN in the US.

2020 Opioid Overdose Death Rates

Among AI/AN in the NW, the **death rate from opioid overdose was 42.0 per 100,000** people in 2020.

The NW AI/AN rate is:

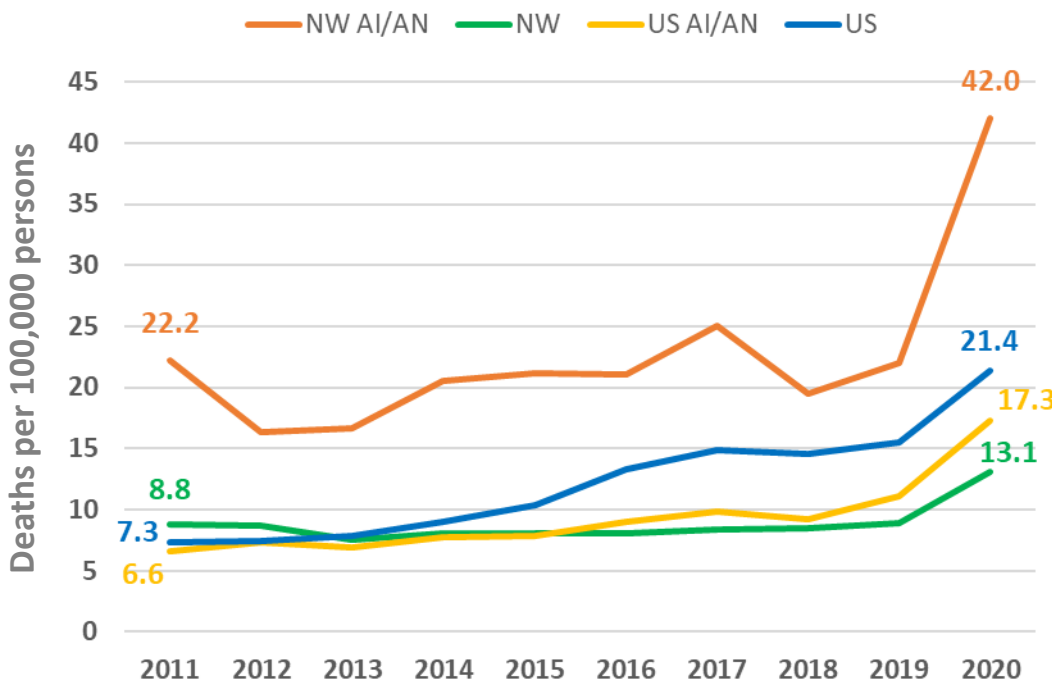
- **3.2 times higher than the overall NW rate**
- **Over twice as high as the US AI/AN rate**
- **And is 2 times the US rate**



The opioid overdose death rate among AI/AN in the Northwest is

3.2x the NW region average

Opioid Overdose Deaths Over Time



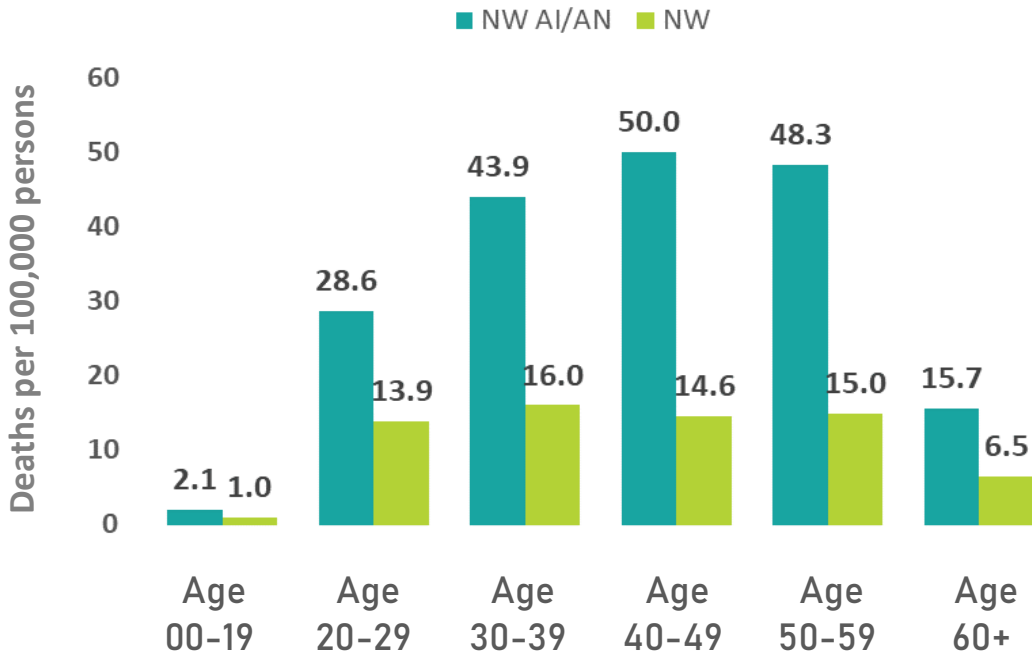
The opioid overdose death rate in the NW has drastically increased from 2019 to 2020. **The rate among AI/AN in the NW increased 89% from 2011 to 2020.**

Similarly, the US and US AI/AN rates have also increased. With a sharp increase seen from 2019 to 2020.

The NW AI/AN rate has historically been **much higher than the NW region, the US AI/AN, and the US average.**



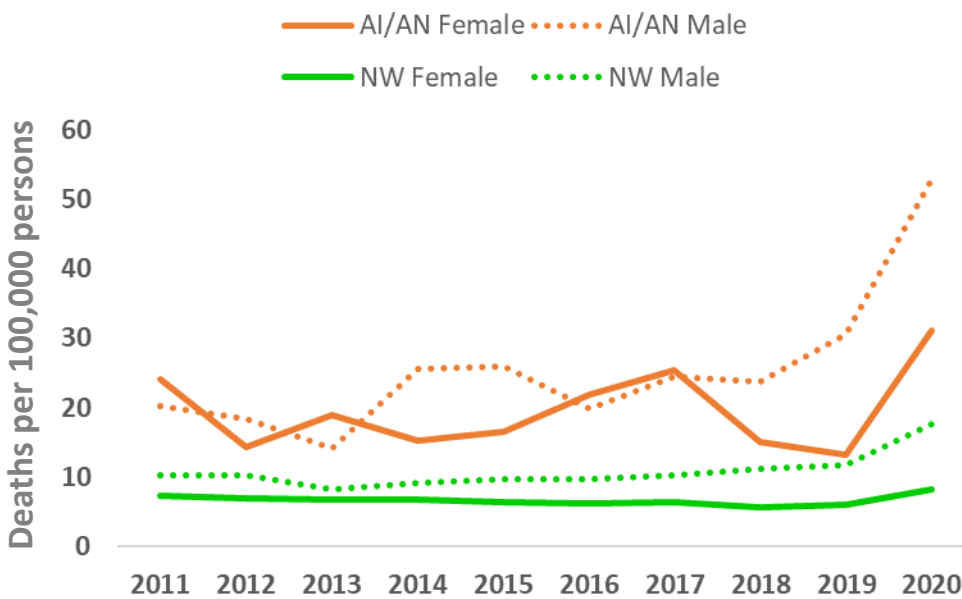
Opioid Overdose Deaths by Age Northwest Region, 2016-2020



Opioid overdose deaths are most common among NW AI/AN **between the ages of 30 and 59**. The rate is **highest among those aged 40 to 49**.

Among all age groups, the rate for **NW AI/AN is about double** the rate of the NW average, but **the overall age distribution is similar**.

Opioid Overdose Deaths by Sex Over Time Northwest Region



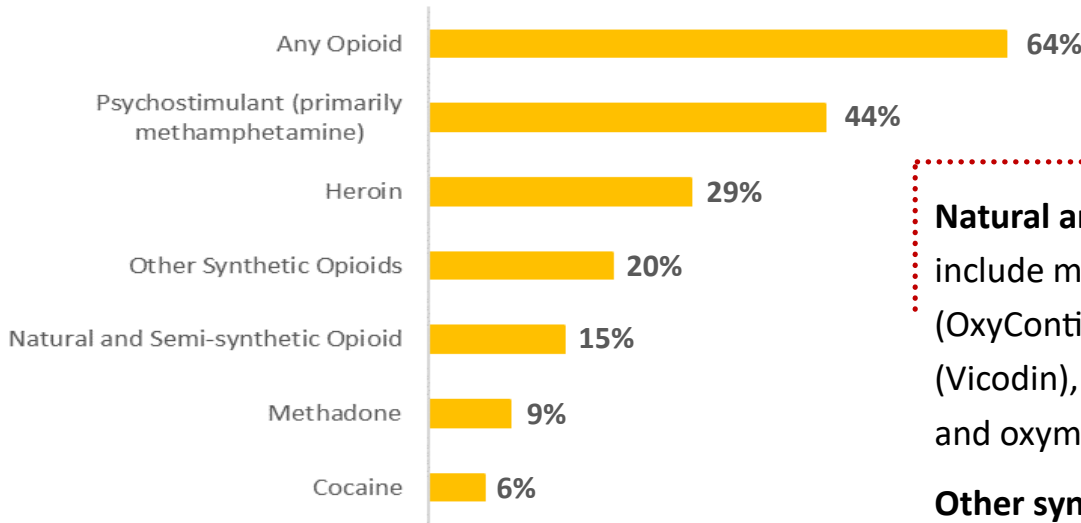
In the Northwest after 2018, AI/AN **males have higher rates** of opioid overdose compared to AI/AN females.

Similarly **in the NW region overall**, the death rate among males is consistently higher compared to females.

The opioid overdose death rate is **higher among AI/AN males and females** than the region averages.



Drugs Involved in AI/AN Overdose Deaths* Northwest Region, 2016-2020



Natural and semi-synthetic opioids include morphine, codeine, oxycodone (OxyContin, Percocet), hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), and oxymorphone (Opana).

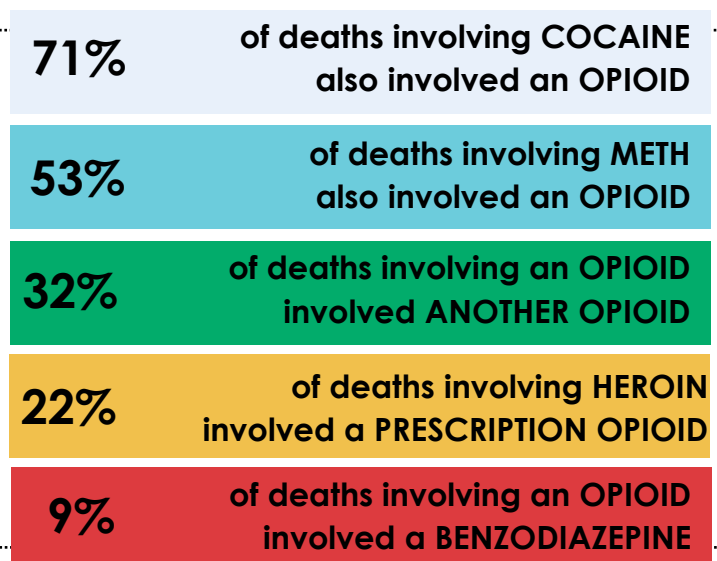
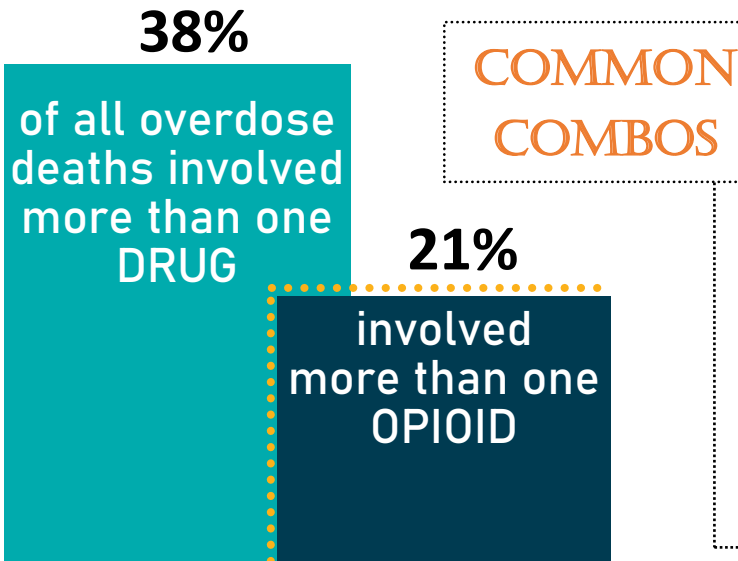
Other synthetic opioids include fentanyl and tramadol. Though fentanyl is the primary drug in this category.

64% of overdose deaths involved an **OPIOID**

Heroin & Other Synthetic Opioids were most common

*More than one drug may be involved in an overdose; therefore categories do not equal 100%

AI/AN Polysubstance Deaths Northwest Region, 2016-2020





About the Data

AI/AN people are often misclassified as another race in health data. For example, an AI/AN person may be incorrectly recorded as “white” (or another race) at their doctor’s office, in their hospital visit record, or on their death certificate. While this type of misclassification can happen to anyone, it happens more often for AI/AN people.

This incorrect race information often causes AI/AN health reports to become inaccurate because they do not include all the AI/AN people who were recorded as another race. This can make it difficult for Tribes to set health priorities and track changes in their communities’ health over time.

The Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board’s IDEA-NW project works to address racial misclassification of AI/AN people by identifying incorrect race information in health datasets. **The race information is corrected and used to create more accurate health reports for AI/AN communities.** This report was made using race-corrected death certificate information.

Without race correction, this report would have excluded:

67 Opioid Overdose Deaths

The rates for AI/AN would have been incorrectly lower by:

Up to **21%**



- **Northwest States Data Sources:** Death certificates from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, corrected for AI/AN racial misclassification
- **National Data Source:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2020 on CDC Wonder Online Database
- Overdose deaths include records with the following ICD-10 codes for underlying cause of death: X40-X44, X60-X64, X85, Y10-Y14
- The data presented in this brief may not be comparable to information published by state or federal agencies due to differences in racial classification



NORTHWEST TRIBAL SUBSTANCE RESOURCES

INDIAN COUNTRY ECHO Substance Use Disorders (SUD)

This program increases access to treatment and recovery services for persons with SUD in tribal communities by training providers on best practices and evidence-based treatments, including DATA Waiver certification, telehealth sessions, and more.

Contact David Stephens at dstephens@npaih.org for more information.

TRIBAL OPIOID RESPONSE Consortium (TOR)

This project assists NW Tribes in developing the capacity to implement a complex, comprehensive opioid response, including increasing awareness of and preventing SUD, as well as developing a Tribal Opioid Strategic Plan.

Contact Colbie Caughlan at ccaughlan@npaih.org for more information.



Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board

www.npaihb.org/idea-nw

503.228.4185 ▪ ideanw@npaih.org

2121 SW Broadway, Suite 300 ▪ Portland, OR 97201