

This preliminary data summary has been developed to provide recent trends in unintentional drug overdose deaths using preliminary 2022 vital statistics mortality data. Comparisons are made between preliminary 2022 data and finalized mortality data from 2012 to 2021. This summary will be updated quarterly as additional mortality data for 2022 is received. The previously published [2020 Ohio Drug Overdose report](#) provides more detailed information about finalized data.

## Data Notes

Coroners have six months to complete death investigations and report death certificates. Therefore, valid state vital statistics data indicating cause of death for 2022 deaths is incomplete, most notably for recent months.

Mortality data in this summary comes from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Bureau of Vital Statistics. Analysis was conducted by the ODH Violence and Injury Epidemiology and Surveillance Section. Data presented below includes Ohio residents who died due to unintentional drug overdose (underlying cause of death International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision [ICD-10] codes X40-X44).

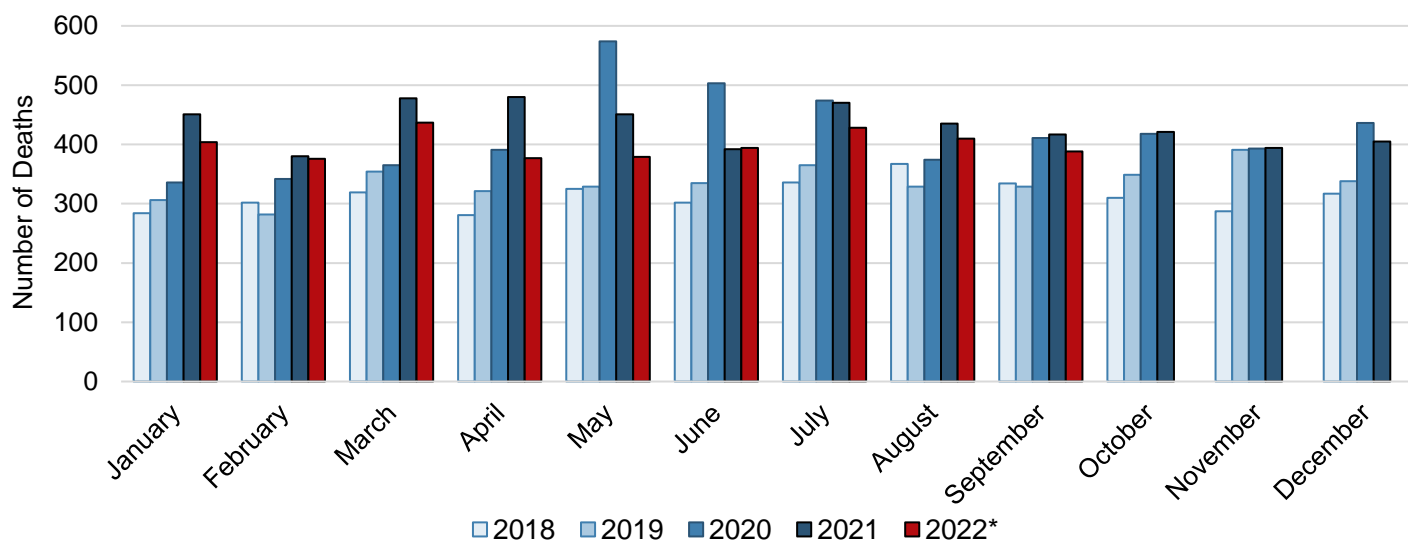
Multiple drugs are usually involved in overdose deaths. Therefore, when classifying deaths according to drug involvement, individual deaths may be reported in more than one drug category (Figures 2-3, 9-10; Table 2). Fentanyl includes fentanyl and fentanyl analogs (e.g., carfentanyl). Psychostimulants include methamphetamine and other psychostimulants with potential for abuse (ICD-10 code T43.6). Natural and semi-synthetic opioids (e.g., oxycodone, hydrocodone) correspond to code T40.2.

\*Preliminary data for 2022 was updated on April 4, 2023.

## Unintentional Drug Overdose

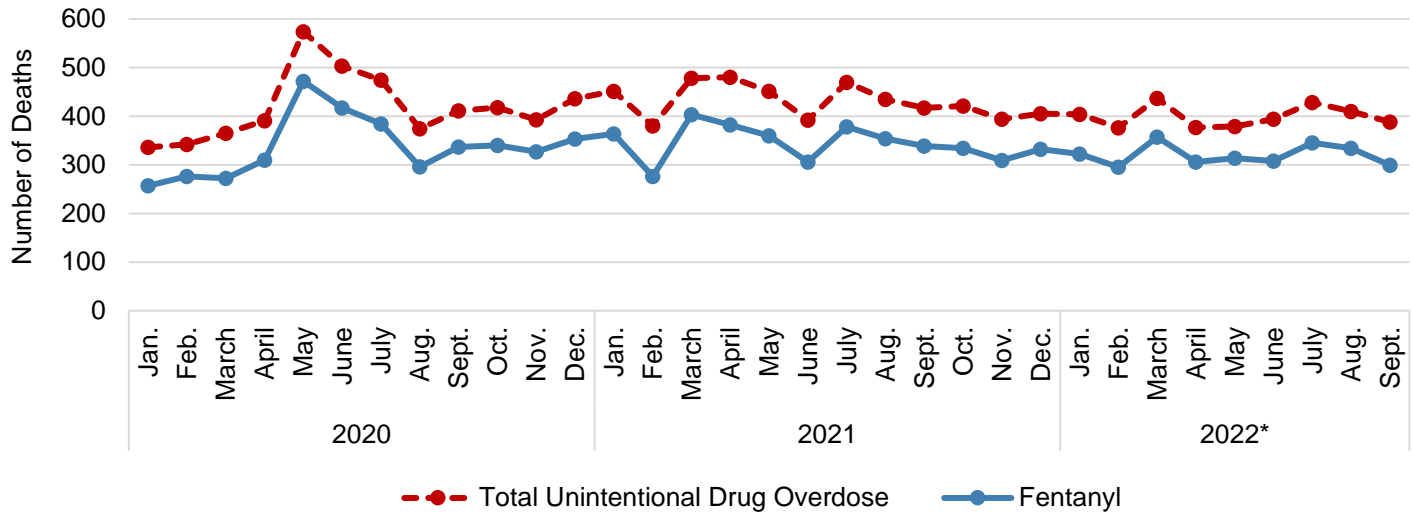
### Monthly Trends

**Figure 1. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by Month and Year, Ohio, 2018-2022\***



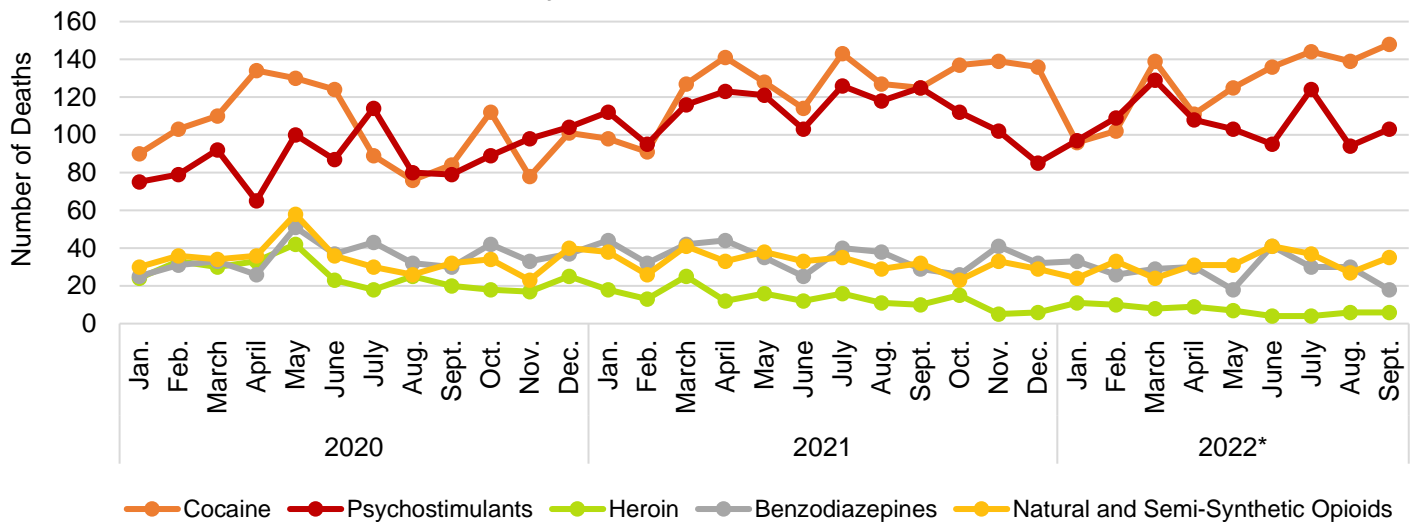
- The figure above shows the number of unintentional drug overdose deaths by month and year and illustrates how overdose deaths fluctuate from month to month.
- May 2020 had the highest number of deaths per month ever recorded in Ohio (574 deaths).
- For the months presented above, 2022 is trending lower than 2021.

**Figure 2. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl by Month, Ohio, 2020-2022\***

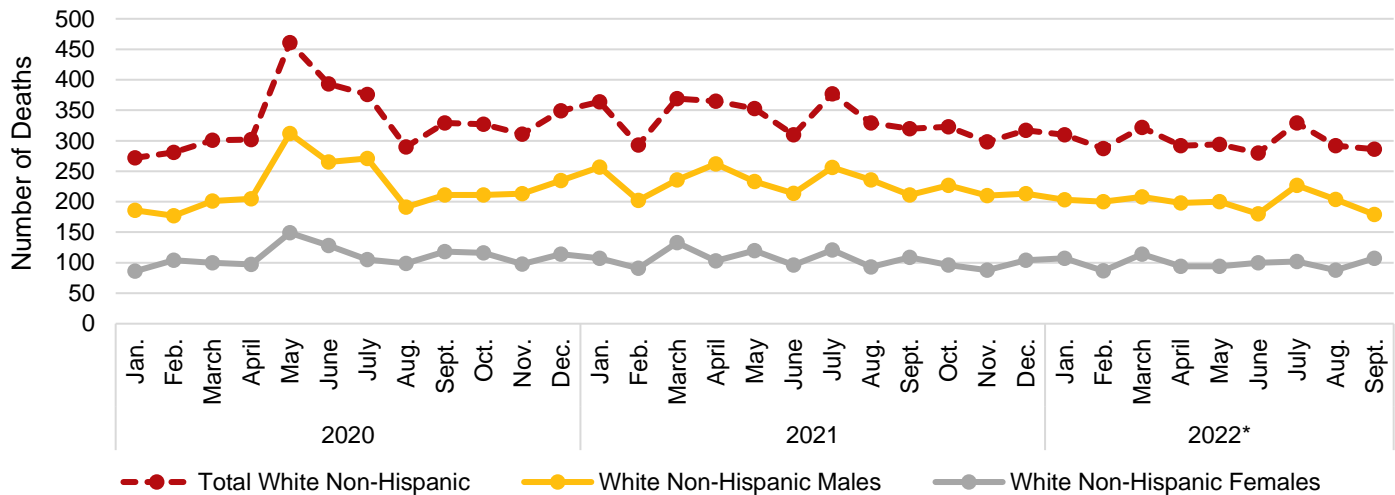


- The number of unintentional drug overdose deaths in Ohio continues to be driven by fentanyl, often in combination with other drugs.
- Fentanyl-related deaths follow the same pattern as the overall number of unintentional drug overdose deaths.

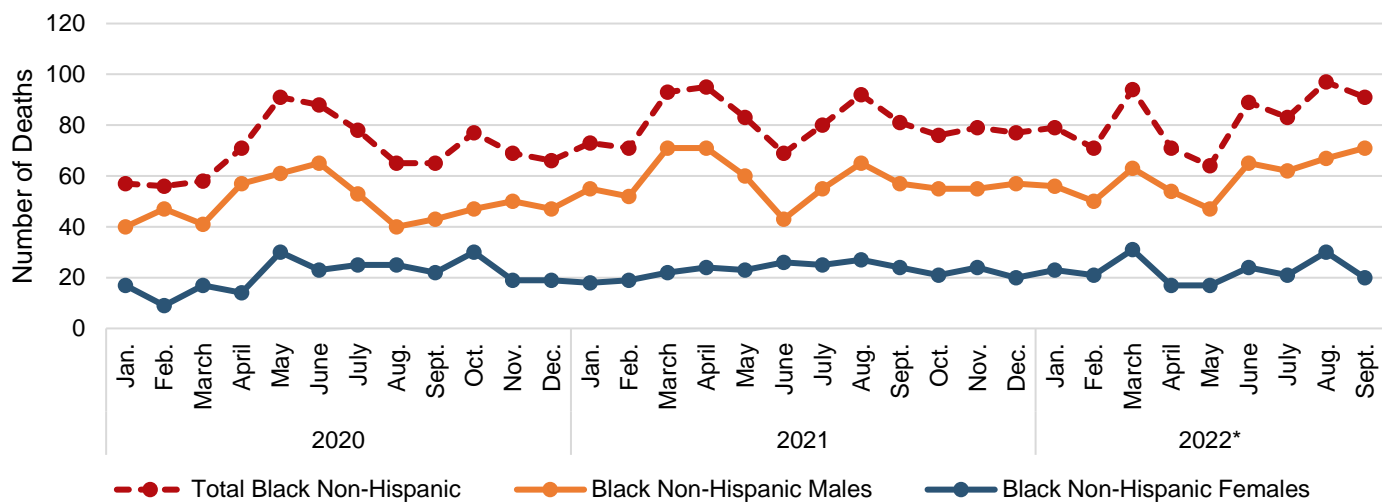
**Figure 3. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Select Drugs by Month, Ohio, 2020-2022\***



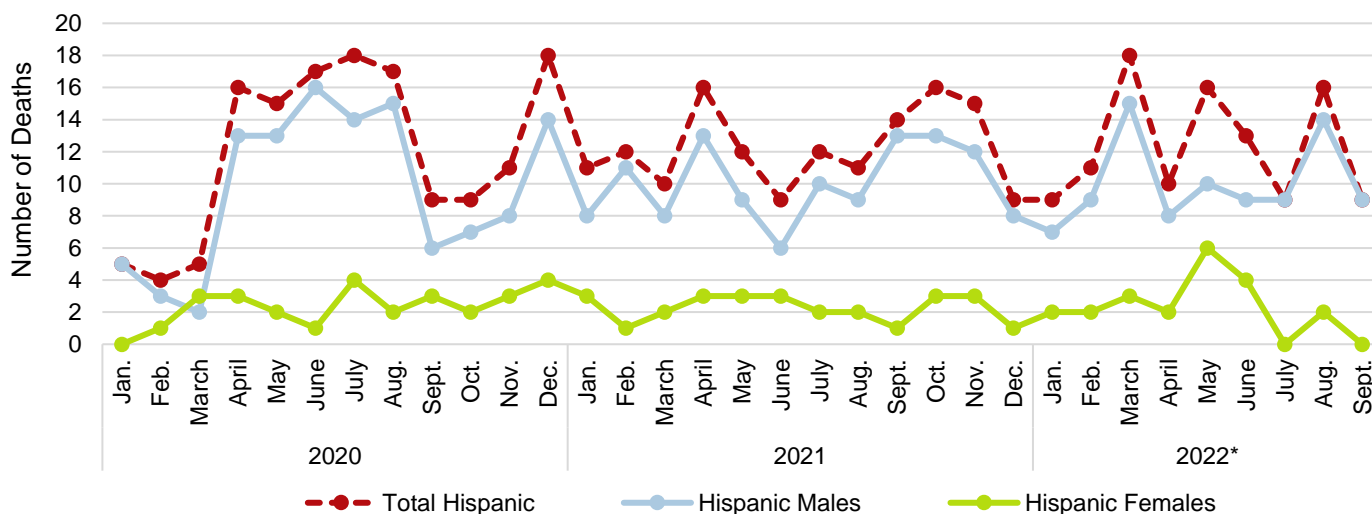
**Figure 4. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Among the White Non-Hispanic Population by Month, Ohio, 2020-2022\***



**Figure 5. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Among the Black Non-Hispanic Population by Month, Ohio, 2020-2022\***

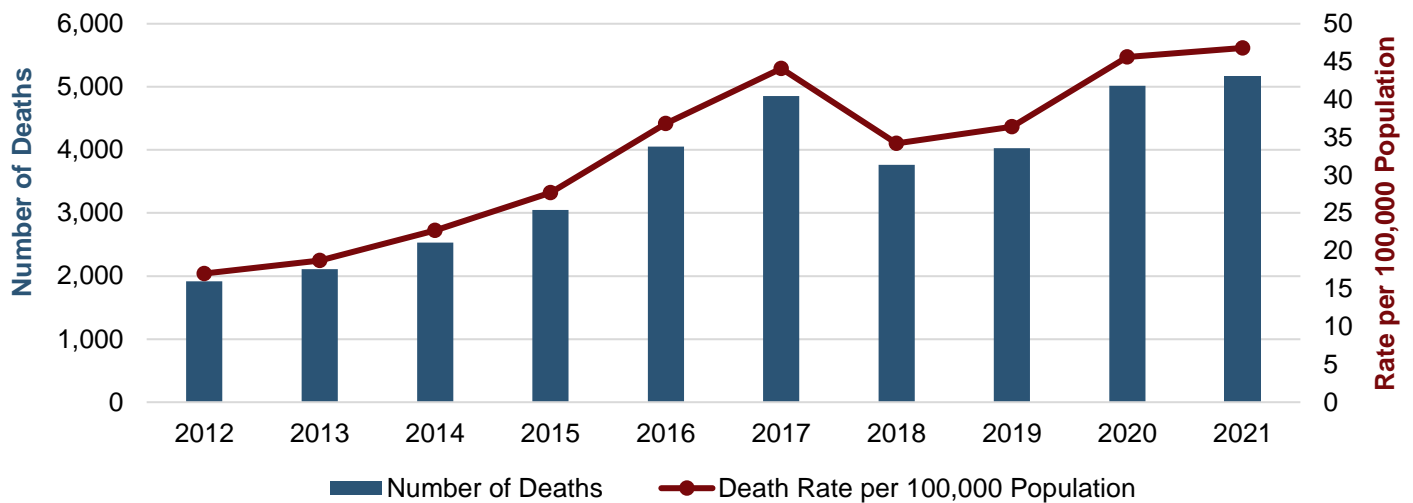


**Figure 6. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Among the Hispanic Population by Month, Ohio, 2020-2022\***



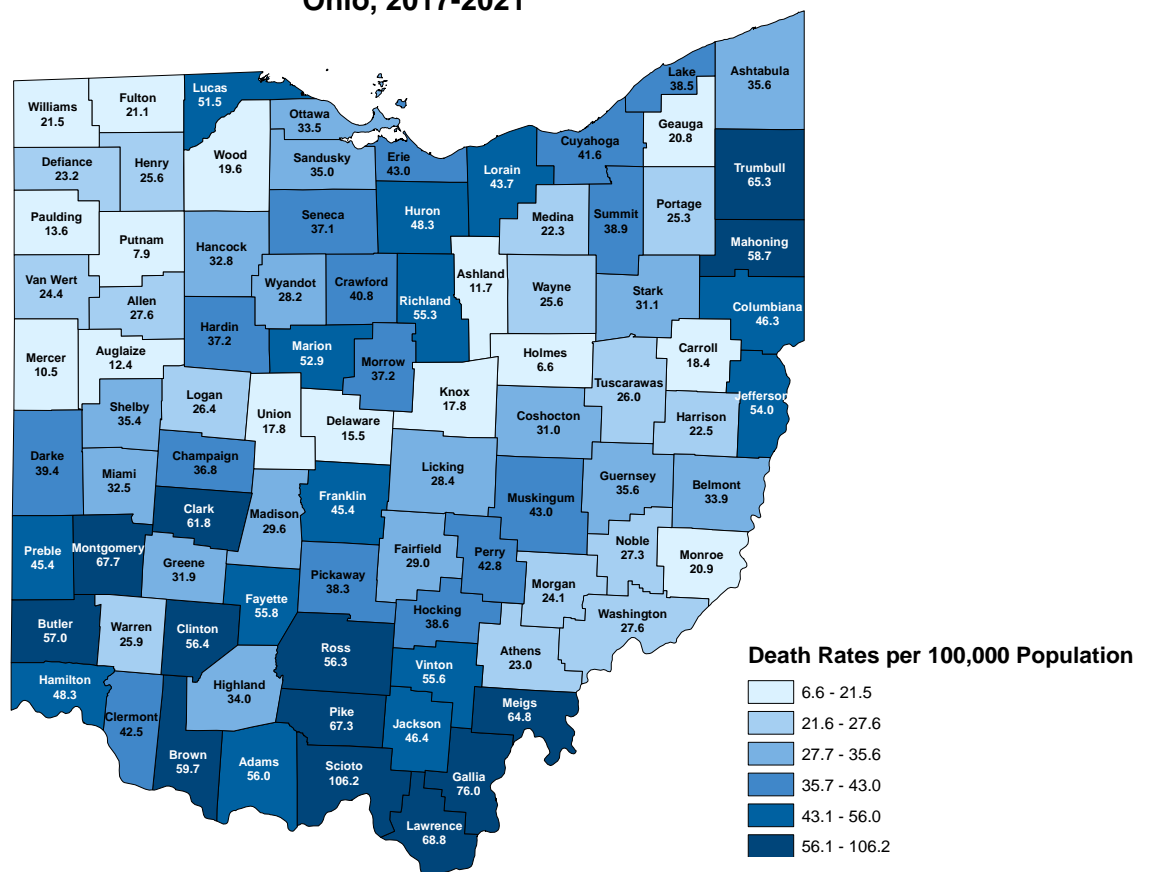
## Annual Trends

**Figure 7. Number and Age-Adjusted Rate of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by Year, Ohio, 2012-2021**



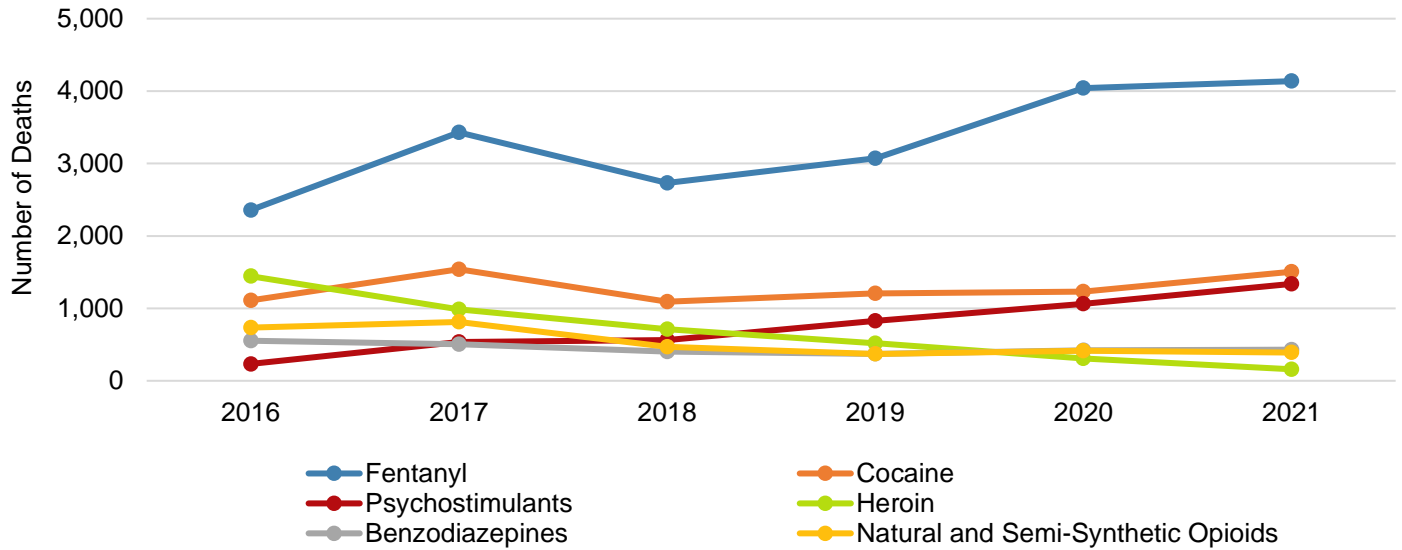
- 2021 surpassed 2020 as the highest year for unintentional drug overdose deaths in Ohio.
- In 2021, there were 5,174 unintentional drug overdose deaths, which was a 3% increase over 2020.

**Figure 8. Average Age-Adjusted Rate of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by County, Ohio, 2017-2021**



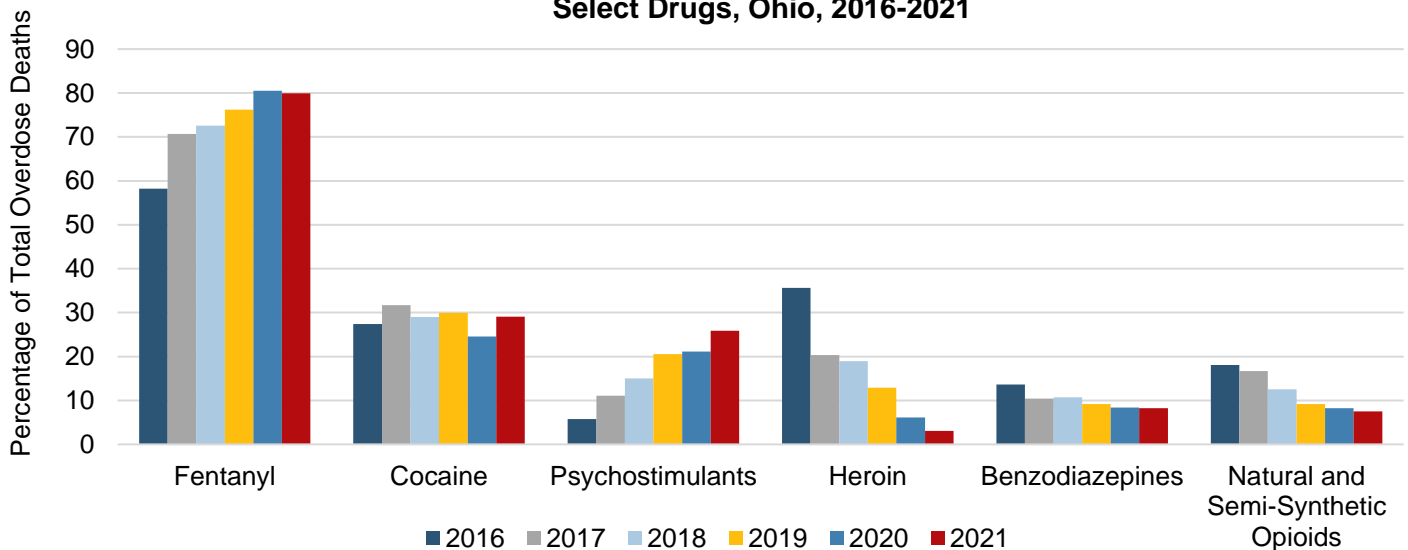
- Scioto County had the highest unintentional drug overdose death rate at 106.2 deaths per 100,000 population, followed by Gallia County and Lawrence County (76.0 and 68.8 deaths per 100,000 population, respectively).

**Figure 9. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Select Drugs, Ohio, 2016-2021**



- In 2021, there were 4,137 deaths related to fentanyl, which was a 2% increase over 2020.
- From 2020 to 2021, deaths related to psychostimulants had the largest percentage increase (26%), followed by deaths related to cocaine (22%).
- Of the substances presented above, heroin and natural and semi-synthetic opioids were the only drug categories with decreases in the number of related deaths from 2020 to 2021 (-48% and -6%, respectively).

**Figure 10. Percentage of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Select Drugs, Ohio, 2016-2021**

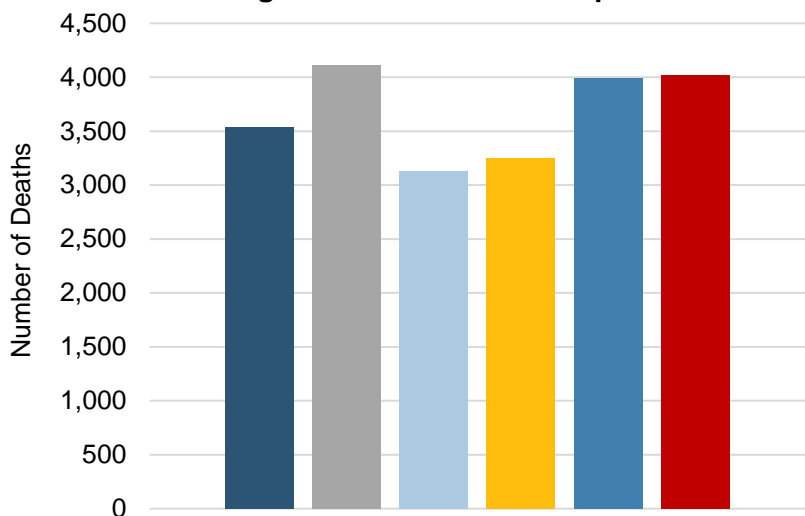


- In 2021, fentanyl was involved in 80% of Ohio unintentional drug overdose deaths, which was a slight decrease compared with 2020 (81%).
- The stimulant categories of cocaine and psychostimulants were the only substances with increases in the percentage of related deaths from 2020 to 2021.
  - Cocaine was involved in 29% of unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2021 compared with 25% of deaths in 2020.
  - Psychostimulants were involved in 26% of unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2021 compared with 21% of deaths in 2020.
- The percentage of unintentional drug overdose deaths involving heroin has continued to decline. In 2021, heroin was involved in 3% of unintentional drug overdose deaths.

**Figure 11. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by Race/Ethnicity, Ohio, 2016-2021**

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

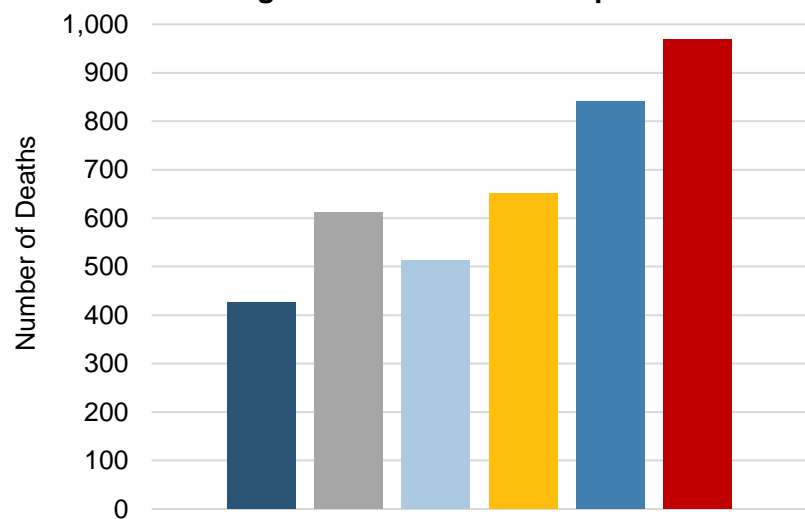
**Figure 11a. White Non-Hispanic**



**White Non-Hispanic:**

- Unintentional drug overdose deaths among the white non-Hispanic population were highest in 2017 (4,109 deaths) and made up 85% of all Ohio drug overdose deaths in that year.
- In 2021, there were 4,018 unintentional drug overdose deaths among white non-Hispanic Ohioans, which was a 1% increase over 2020 (3,992 deaths). In comparison, total Ohio unintentional drug overdose deaths increased 3% from 2020 to 2021.

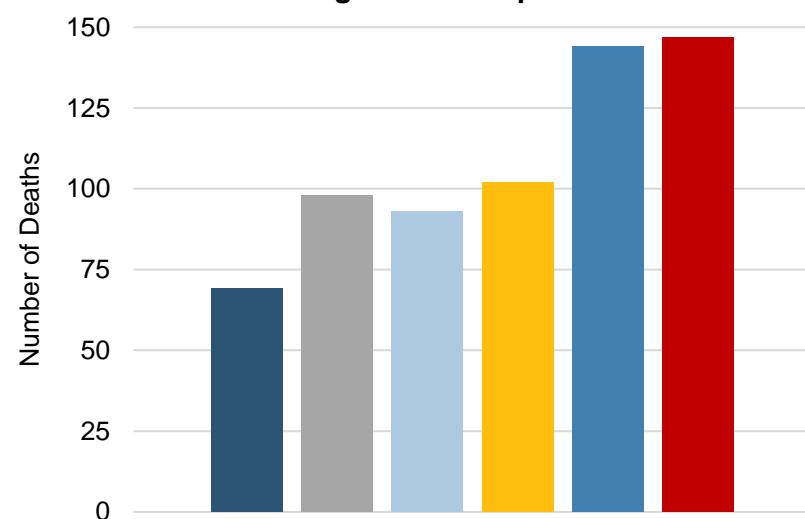
**Figure 11b. Black Non-Hispanic**



**Black Non-Hispanic:**

- Unintentional drug overdose deaths among the Black non-Hispanic population were highest in 2021 (969 deaths).
- From 2020 to 2021, unintentional drug overdose deaths among Black non-Hispanic Ohioans increased 15%, which was the largest increase among the reported race/ethnicity groups.

**Figure 11c. Hispanic**



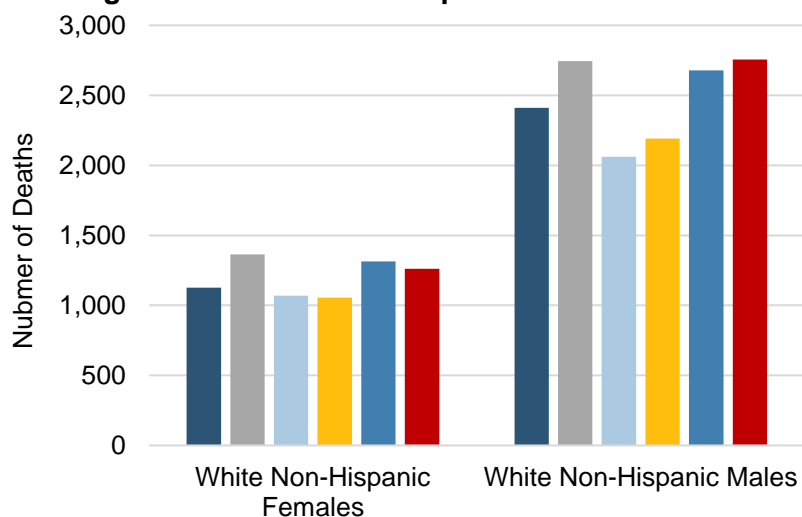
**Hispanic:**

- Unintentional drug overdose deaths among the Hispanic population were highest in 2021 (147 deaths).
- From 2020 to 2021, unintentional drug overdose deaths among the Hispanic population increased 2%.

**Figure 12. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths by Sex and Race/Ethnicity, Ohio, 2016-2021**

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

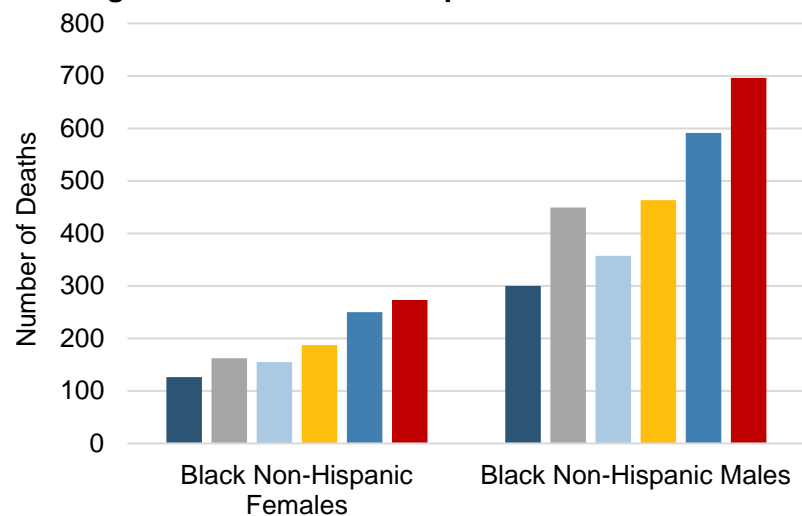
**Figure 12a. White Non-Hispanic Males and Females**



**White Non-Hispanic Males and Females:**

- Unintentional drug overdose deaths among white non-Hispanic males were highest in 2021 (2,757 deaths), while deaths among white non-Hispanic females were highest in 2017 (1,365 deaths).
- From 2020 to 2021, unintentional drug overdose deaths among white non-Hispanic males increased 3%, while deaths among white non-Hispanic females decreased 4%.

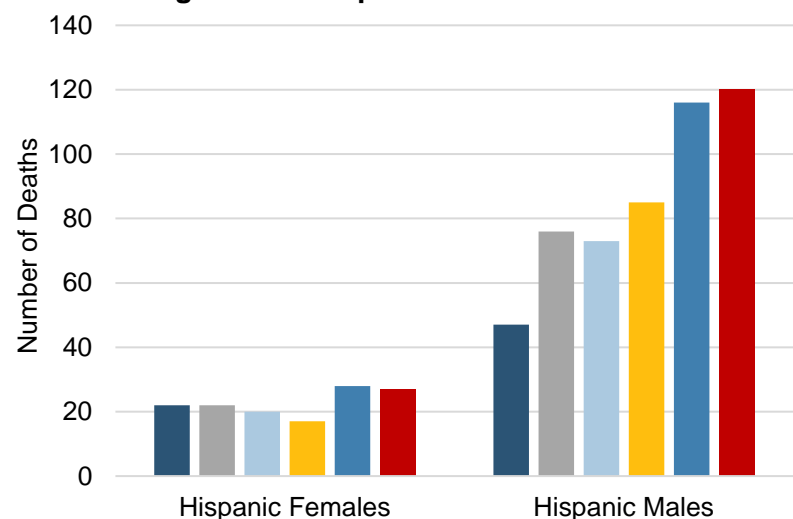
**Figure 12b. Black Non-Hispanic Males and Females**



**Black Non-Hispanic Males and Females:**

- Unintentional drug overdose deaths among Black non-Hispanic males and females were highest in 2021 (696 and 273 deaths, respectively).
- From 2020 to 2021, unintentional drug overdose deaths among Black non-Hispanic males and females increased 18% and 9%, respectively.

**Figure 12c. Hispanic Males and Females**



**Hispanic Males and Females:**

- Unintentional drug overdose deaths among Hispanic males were highest in 2021 (120 deaths), while deaths among Hispanic females were highest in 2020 (28 deaths).
- From 2020 to 2021, unintentional drug overdose deaths among Hispanic males increased 3%, while deaths among Hispanic females decreased 4%.

**Table 1. Demographic Summary of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths, Ohio, 2016-2021**

Demographics	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Age</b>						
<15	4	5	4	4	5	7
15-24	345	361	247	241	327	260
25-34	1,143	1,330	1,063	1,072	1,325	1,230
35-44	1,022	1,283	1,054	1,108	1,385	1,492
45-54	886	1,051	703	807	1,046	1,118
55-64	557	700	571	643	740	854
65+	93	124	122	153	189	213
<b>Sex</b>						
Female	1,284	1,560	1,250	1,269	1,599	1,572
Male	2,766	3,294	2,514	2,758	3,418	3,602
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
American Indian, Non-Hispanic	4	16	6	4	6	5
Asian/Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	8	14	11	14	21	23
Black, Non-Hispanic	426	611	512	650	841	969
White, Non-Hispanic	3,538	4,109	3,131	3,247	3,992	4,018
Hispanic	69	98	93	102	144	147
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Sex</b>						
Black Non-Hispanic Females	126	162	155	187	250	273
Black Non-Hispanic Males	300	449	357	463	591	696
White Non-Hispanic Females	1,127	1,365	1,069	1,055	1,314	1,261
White Non-Hispanic Males	2,411	2,744	2,062	2,191	2,678	2,757
Hispanic Females	22	22	20	17	28	27
Hispanic Males	47	76	73	85	116	120
<b>Total Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>4,050</b>	<b>4,854</b>	<b>3,764</b>	<b>4,028</b>	<b>5,017</b>	<b>5,174</b>

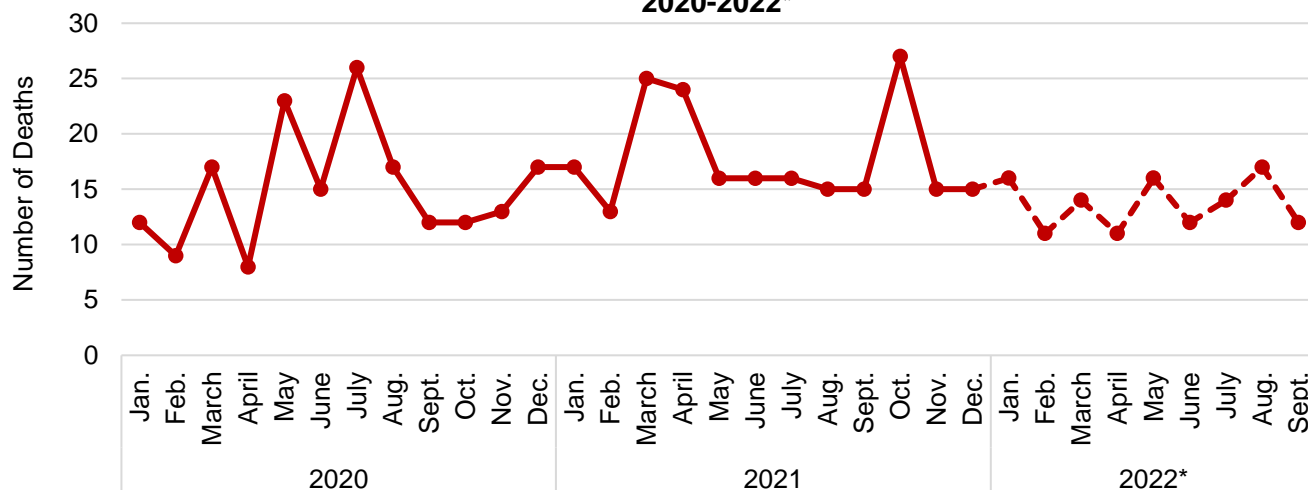
**Table 2. Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Select Substances, Ohio, 2016-2021**

Drug Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Percentage of 2021 Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths
<b>Opioids</b>							
Total Opioids	3,495	4,162	3,150	3,372	4,308	4,369	84%
Fentanyl	2,357	3,431	2,733	3,070	4,041	4,137	80%
Natural and Semi-Synthetic Opioids	733	812	471	370	415	390	8%
Heroin	1,444	987	714	520	308	159	3%
<b>Non-Opioids</b>							
Cocaine	1,109	1,540	1,092	1,206	1,231	1,506	29%
Psychostimulants	233	537	564	827	1,062	1,338	26%
Benzodiazepines	553	506	403	371	420	428	8%
<b>Total Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>4,050</b>	<b>4,854</b>	<b>3,764</b>	<b>4,028</b>	<b>5,017</b>	<b>5,174</b>	

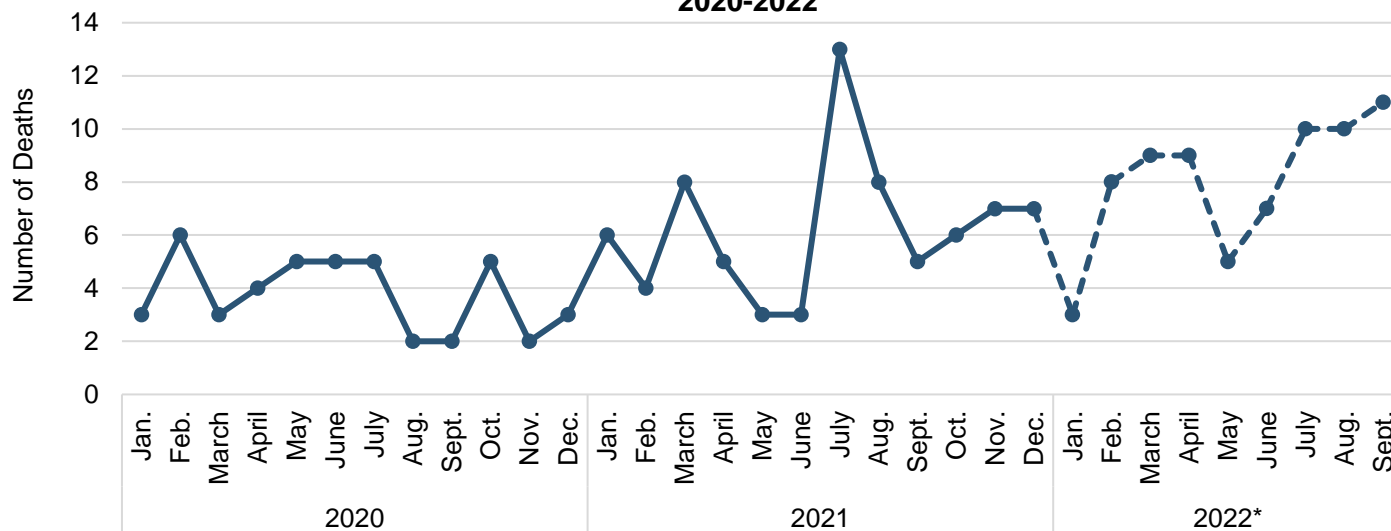


## Emerging Trends

**Figure 13. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Gabapentin<sup>1</sup> Among Ohio Residents Who Died in Ohio by Month, 2020-2022\***



**Figure 14. Number of Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Xylazine<sup>1</sup> Among Ohio Residents Who Died in Ohio by Month, 2020-2022\***



**Table 3. Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Select Substances Among Ohio Residents Who Died in Ohio, 2017-2021**

Drug Category <sup>1</sup>	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Number	% Involving Opioids	Number	% Involving Opioids	Number	% Involving Opioids	Number	% Involving Opioids	Number	% Involving Opioids
Gabapentin	118	88%	110	88%	155	88%	181	85%	214	87%
Xylazine	0	—	0	—	15	93%	45	100%	75	99%

- Of the total 2021 unintentional drug overdose deaths among Ohio residents who died in Ohio, 4% involved gabapentin, and 1% involved xylazine. The majority of these deaths also involved an opioid such as fentanyl.

1. Includes Ohio residents who died in Ohio due to unintentional drug poisoning (underlying cause of death International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision [ICD-10], codes X40-X44) with the select substances indicated in the death certificate literal fields.