

2020 ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY DRUG-INVOLVED DEATHS

The St. Louis Metro region continues to account for over half of all overdose deaths in the state of Missouri. The St. Louis region also **accounted for 81% of drug-involved deaths among Black individuals statewide.**

St. Louis City and County Combined				
	2019	2020	Percent Change	Percent Change (by Race)
Opioid-Involved Deaths				
Total (All Races)	576	727	26.2%	
Black Female	62	96	54.8%	31.5%
Black Male	224	280	25.0%	
White Female	97	92	-5.2%	17.3%
White Male	187	241	28.9%	
All Drug-Involved Deaths				
Total (All Races)	796	946	18.8%	
Black Female	85	130	52.9%	28.6%
Black Male	282	342	30.5%	
White Female	138	120	-13.0%	8.2%
White Male	278	330	18.7%	

SOURCE: St. Louis City and St. Louis County Medical Examiner Office; Numbers are reflective of the location of death, not residency

Other Key Points:

- Though deaths involving opioids *with* stimulants have increased, deaths involving opioids *only* (without stimulants) have largely stayed level or decreased for most groups
- Rates of fentanyl-involved deaths continue to be highest among Black males in St. Louis City
- Deaths involving stimulants *only* (without opioids) are highest among Black and White males in St. Louis City, driven by cocaine and meth, respectively.
- Deaths involving cocaine increased the most among Black females in St. Louis City (400%)

Key Recommendations for St. Louis City and County

Focus on Racial Equity in Recovery, Treatment, and Support Services.

This includes looking at new and innovative approaches to engage people of color and the communities they live in, including collaboration with community-led efforts to address overdose disparities. The CENTER initiative is one project currently working at this. More information can be found [here](#).

Identify and Expand Services Focused on Addressing Stimulant Use Disorder (StimUD)

Although Contingency Management (CM) for StimUD is starting in some places, the increases in stimulant overdoses highlights a need to expand services specifically addressing StimUD across the St. Louis Metro area. For more information on harm reduction strategies and StimUD visit our [website](#).

Recommendations and Resources

Carry Naloxone (also known as Narcan). Naloxone is free to obtain in the state of Missouri *with or without a prescription*. To get more information on where to get Narcan visit noMDeaths.org, MHoProject.org, NextDistro.org, or DotsProject.org.

Educate on Harm Reduction and Overdose prevention. If you work with or know individuals who actively use substances, educate them on safe using practices that can prevent an overdose. Some strategies to consider are:

- **Never use alone.** Have someone else present who has naloxone and knows how to administer if needed. Also, if with another substance user, stagger use between individuals by at least 30 minutes. If they are unable to have someone with them, they can contact the [Never Use Alone hotline at \(800\)484-3731](https://www.8004843731.com). They will obtain information and contact EMS emergency response if needed.
- **Be aware that fentanyl has contaminated a lot of the drug supply.** Teach people to be aware of this possibility, avoid mixing drugs, go slow, and start small.
- **Learn how to recognize & respond to an overdose.** For info or training on overdose response, visit [MO Hope Project](https://www.MoHopeProject.org) or [noMDeaths Harm Reduction and Prevention](https://noMDeaths.org) sites.
- **Discuss the risks of overdose with stimulant use.** Stimulant deaths have been increasing in part due to the addition of fentanyl in the supply and/or stimulant related overdoses (i.e. “overamping”) For more info on harm reduction for meth, cocaine, and other stimulants, visit our [website](#) on Stimulant Use Disorders.

Get Connected to Treatment and Recovery Services. Free treatment and recovery services are available statewide. These include access to medications, therapy, peer coaching, housing, and more. Information about [treatment](#), [recovery services](#), [recovery housing](#), and more is available on the noMDeaths website.

Promote a focus on equitable access to substance use services. Significant racial disparities in overdose deaths and treatment retention continue across the state. It is critical for resources, education, and services to focus on equitable and culturally responsive models of care. You can find more information on Racial Equity and current approaches [here](#). Also, to learn more about The CENTER Initiative (an innovative approach to address racial equity and substance use here in St. Louis), please visit centerstl.org.

For more information please visit noMDeaths.org or contact noMDeaths@mimh.edu