MIDWEST HIDTA
North Dakota • South Dakota • Nebraska • Kansas • Iowa • Missouri

(U) Fatal Overdoses in the Midwest HIDTA

January 2022

(U) Overview

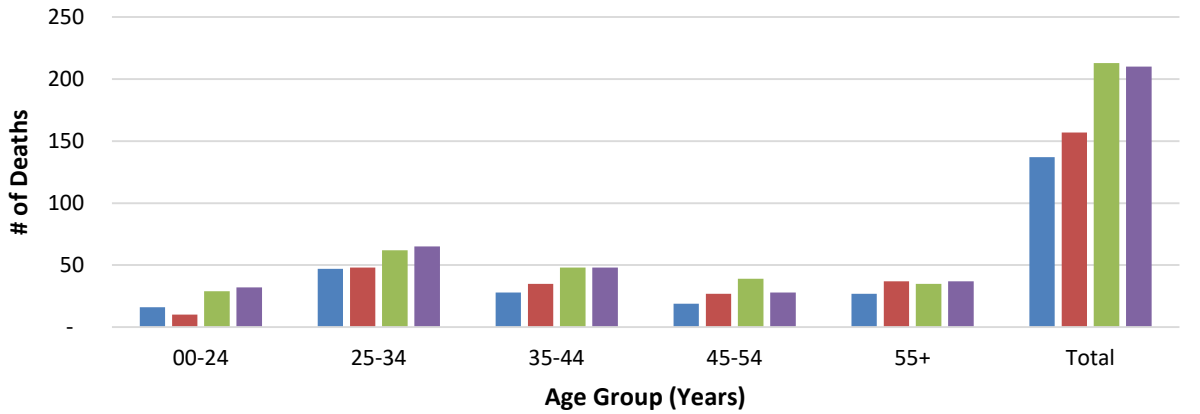
(U) Since 2018, drug overdose fatalities have significantly increased in many areas of the Midwest HIDTA region. According to data from the departments of health of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and South Dakota, the increase in overdose deaths are primarily attributable to opioids and psychostimulants[1]. Drug seizure data collected from Midwest HIDTA law enforcement initiatives during this time period mirrors the increase in psychostimulant and opioid overdose deaths. Between 2018 and 2021, Midwest HIDTA initiatives reported an increase in the seizure amounts of cocaine (11%), methamphetamine (81%), and fentanyl (204%).

(U) Iowa

(U) In Iowa, opioid overdose deaths increased across all age groups between 2018 and 2021[2]. More specifically, between 2018 and 2021:

- Opioid-related overdose deaths among those aged 0-24 increased by 100%;
- Opioid-related overdose deaths among those aged 25-34 increased by 38%;
- Opioid-related overdose deaths among those aged 35-44 increased by 71%;
- Opioid-related overdose deaths among those aged 45-54 increased by 47%;
- Opioid-related overdose deaths among those aged 55+ increased by 37%; and
- The total number of opioid-related overdose deaths increased by 53%.

(U) Figure 1: Iowa Deaths Involving Opioids by Age Group



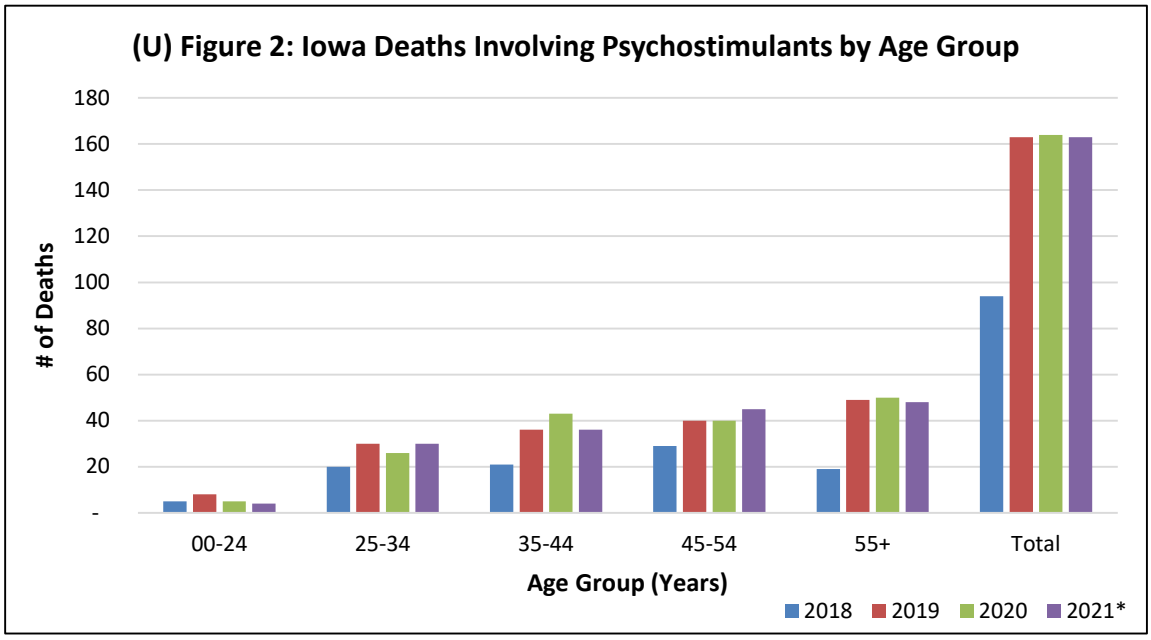
Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

[1] In this document, psychostimulants (ICD-10 Code T43.6) include: amphetamines, caffeine, methylphenidate, and unspecified/other psychostimulants. It does not include cocaine (ICD-10 Code T43.5).

[2] 2021 data current through 11/30/2021

(U) Similarly, the total number of psychostimulant overdose deaths increased 73% between 2018 and 2021[3]. More specifically, between 2018 and 2021:

- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among those aged 0-24 decreased by 20%;
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among those aged 25-34 increased by 50%;
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among those aged 35-44 increased by 71%;
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among those aged 45-54 increased by 55%; and
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among those aged 55+ increased by 153%.



Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

(U) Figures 3 and 4 display opioid- and psychostimulant-related overdose deaths by sex. According to the data, between 2018 and 2021:

- Opioid-related overdose deaths among females increased by 52%;
- Opioid-related overdose deaths among males increased by 54%;
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among females increased by 152%; and
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths among males increased by 51%.

[3] 2021 data current through 11/30/2021

(U) Figure 3: Iowa Deaths Involving Opioids by Sex				
Sex	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021***
Female	46	48	85	70
Male	91	109	128	140
Total	137	157	213	210

*2021 data through 11/30/2021

Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

(U) Figure 4: Iowa Deaths Involving Psychostimulants by Sex				
Sex	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021***
Female	21	55	56	53
Male	73	108	108	110
Total	94	163	164	163

*2021 data through 11/30/2021

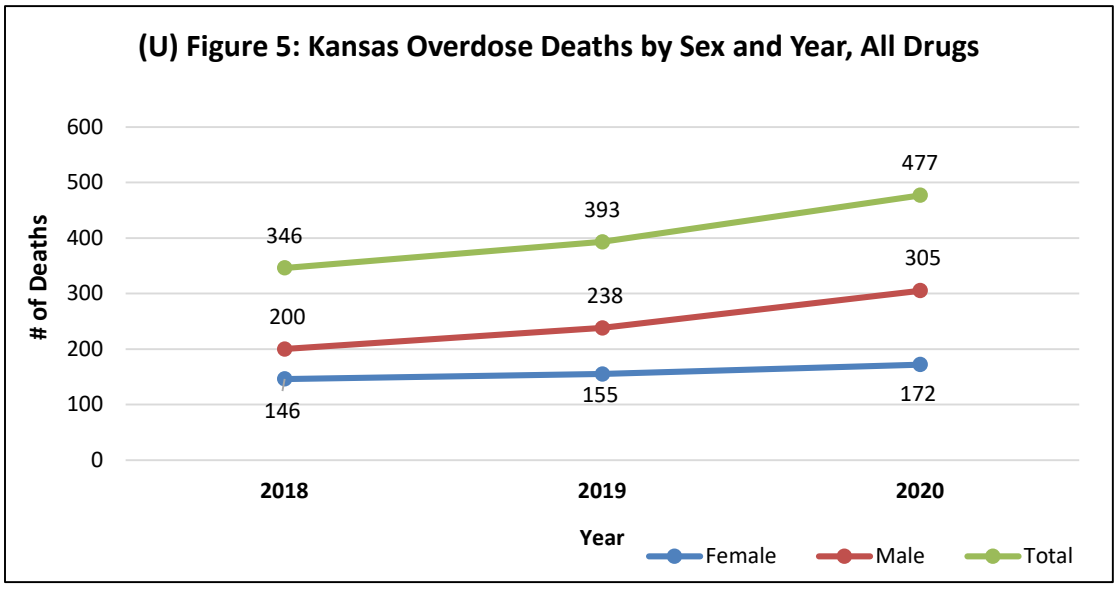
Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

(U) Kansas

(U) In Kansas, overdose deaths for all drugs increased across both sexes between 2018 and 2020. More specifically, between 2018 and 2020:

- The total number of overdose deaths for all drugs increased by 38%;
- The number of overdose deaths for all drugs for females increased by 18%; and
- The number of overdose deaths for all drugs for males increased by 53%.

(U) With respect to age groups, all drug overdose deaths for those aged 15-24 experienced the greatest increase between 2018 and 2020 (117%), while those aged 55-64 experienced the second-greatest increase (48%).



Source: Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment

(U) Figure 6 depicts Kansas overdose deaths by drug category and year. According to the data, between 2018 and 2020:

- Any opioid-related overdose deaths increased by 62%;
- Cocaine-related overdose deaths increased by 39%;
- Heroin-related overdose deaths increased by 9%;
- Psychostimulant-related overdose deaths increased by 138%; and
- Synthetic opioid-related overdose deaths increased by 222%.

(U) Figure 6: Kansas Overdose Deaths by Year and Drug Type

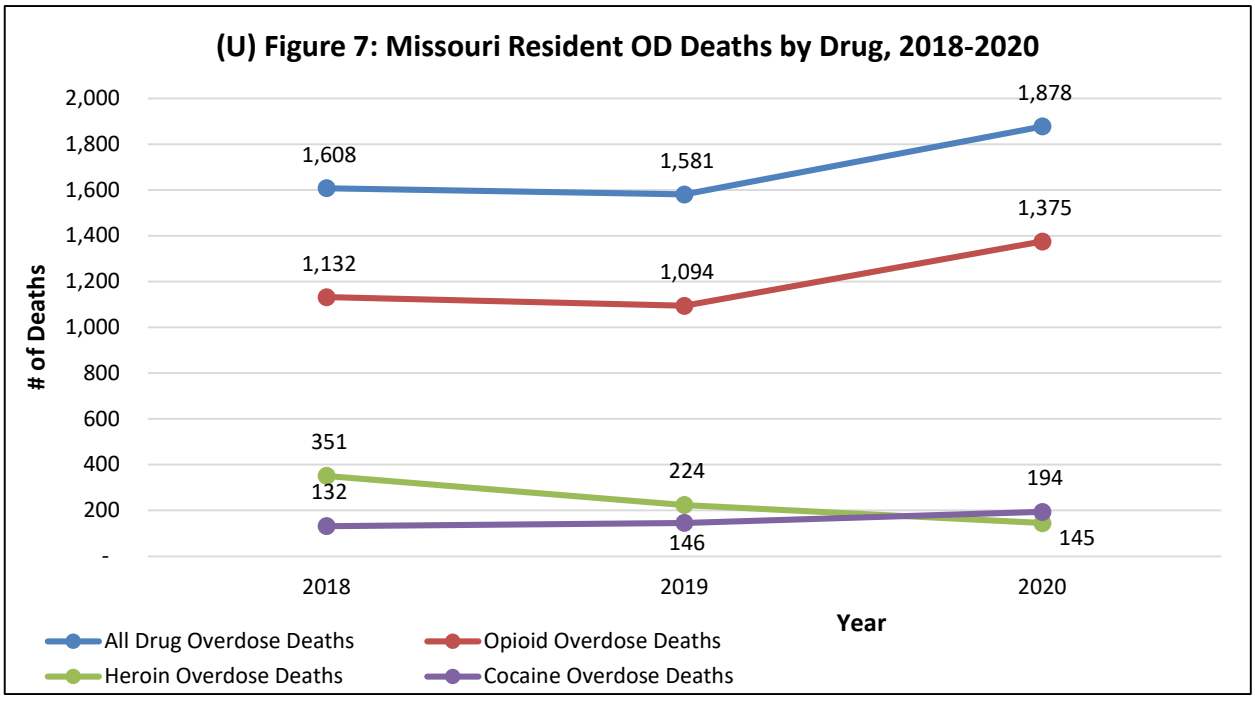
	Year		
Drug Type	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
Any Opioid	157	177	254
Cocaine	28	33	39
Heroin	33	42	36
Psychostimulants	77	153	183
Synthetic Opioids	50	70	161

Source: Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment

(U) Missouri

(U) In Missouri, between 2018 and 2020:

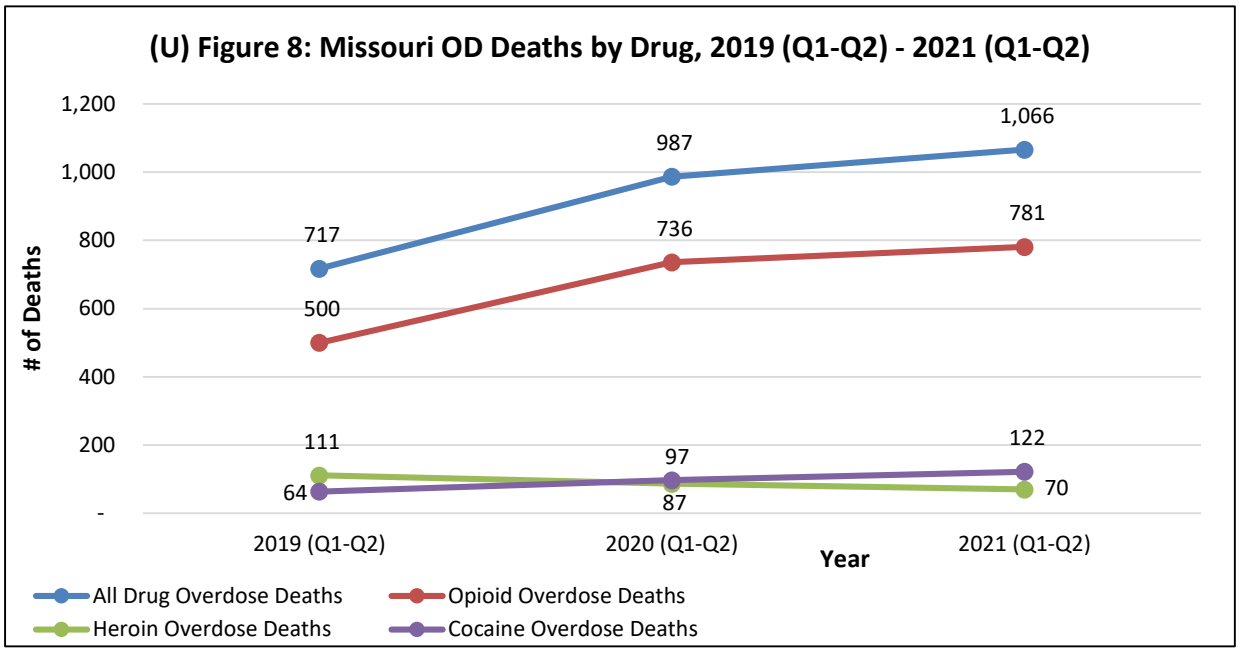
- Overdose deaths for all drugs increased by 17%;
- Overdose deaths for all opioids increased by 21%;
- Overdose deaths for heroin decreased by 59%; and
- Overdose deaths for cocaine increased by 47%.



Source: Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services

(U) Due to a six- to nine-month delay in reporting, the most recent data available from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is for Q1 and Q2 2021. Figure 8 displays the number of fatal drug overdoses by drug for the first two quarters of 2019 through 2021. According to the data:

- Overdose deaths for all drugs increased by 49%;
- Overdose deaths for all opioids increased by 56%;
- Overdose deaths for heroin decreased by 37%; and
- Overdose deaths for cocaine increased by 91%.



Source: Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services

(U) Figure 9 illustrates Missouri overdose death counts based on region and demographic. Between 2019 and 2020[4]:

- The Northwest Region reported the greatest increase of all drug overdose deaths (52%);
- The Northwest Region reported the greatest increase of all drug overdose deaths for males (29%);
- The Central Region reported the greatest increase of all drug overdose deaths for females (45%);
- The Kansas City Metro reported the greatest increase of all drug overdose deaths for ages 15 to 24 (68%);
- The Southwest Region reported the greatest increase of all drug overdose deaths for ages 25 to 34 (74%).

[4] Demographic data is only available for Missouri regions for 2019 and 2020.

(U) Figure 9: Missouri Overdose Mortality Counts Regional Comparison (Percent Change from 2019)										
Region	All Drug Overdose Deaths									
		Gender		Age						
	Total	Male	Female	Under 15	15 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65+
Central Region	26.2%	17.3%	44.7%	*	*	43.2%	18.4%	25.0%	0.0%	*
Kansas City Metro	21.8%	25.7%	15.0%	*	68.2%	27.5%	31.4%	10.6%	-2.2%	*
Northeastern Region	-16.2%	-28.6%	0.0%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Northwestern Region	52.0%	29.4%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Southeastern Region	31.4%	26.6%	39.5%	*	*	12.9%	17.2%	0.0%	*	*
Southwestern Region	12.8%	19.6%	1.5%	*	*	74.3%	16.3%	-36.8%	-2.6%	*
St. Louis Metro	17.1%	21.7%	7.0%	*	3.9%	27.9%	21.0%	17.7%	9.5%	-8.2%
Missouri Total	**18.8%**	**21.0%**	**14.4%**	*	**31.3%**	**31.7%**	**21.4%**	**9.2%**	**8.3%**	**-3.2%**

* Percent change not calculated where the previous year's deaths were less than 15.

Source: Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services, 2021

(U) Figure 10 illustrates Missouri overdose death counts by drug category and region. Between 2019 and 2020[5]:

- The Southeast Region reported the greatest increase in opioid overdose deaths (69%);
- The Kansas City Metro reported the greatest increase in synthetic opioid (fentanyl) overdose deaths (149%);
- The St. Louis Metro reported the greatest increase in stimulant overdose deaths (47%), amphetamine overdose deaths (47%) and cocaine overdose deaths (46%); and
- The Central Region reported the greatest increase in stimulant and opioid-combined deaths (69%).

[5] Demographic data is only available for Missouri regions for 2019 and 2020.

(U) Figure 10: Missouri Overdose Mortality Counts Regional Comparison (Percent Change from 2019)						
Region	Opioid-Overdose Deaths	Synthetic (Fentanyl) Overdose Deaths T40.4	Stimulants	Amphetamine	Cocaine	Stimulants and Opioids
	Total/Count	Total/Count	Total/Count	Total/Count	Total/Count	Total/Count
Central Region	26.0%	67.6%	43.1%	32.7%	*	68.6%
Kansas City Metro	55.9%	148.6%	0.8%	9.4%	-23.7%	28.6%
Northeastern Region	-27.8%	*	-11.8%	-11.8%	*	*
Northwestern Region	*	*	*	*	*	*
Southeastern Region	69.4%	53.3%	38.2%	43.8%	*	*
Southwestern Region	23.8%	46.4%	8.0%	5.8%	*	35.3%
St. Louis Metro	19.3%	24.9%	47.2%	47.2%	45.5%	60.5%
Missouri Total	**25.7%**	**36.2%**	**28.3%**	**27.1%**	**32.9%**	**57.0%**

* Percent change not calculated where the previous year's deaths were less than 15.

Source: Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services, 2021

(U) South Dakota

(U) In South Dakota, overdose deaths for all drugs increased between 2018 and 2020. More specifically, between 2018 and 2020:

- Overdose deaths for all drugs increased by 45%;
- Overdose deaths for all opioids increased by 59%;
- Overdose deaths for prescription opioids increased by 74%;
- Overdose deaths for cocaine decreased by 38%;
- Overdose deaths for fentanyl increased by 150%;
- Overdose deaths for heroin increased by 20%; and
- Overdose deaths for methamphetamine increased by 131%.

(U) Figure 11: South Dakota Resident Deaths by Quarter, 2018-2020			
Drug Category	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
All Drugs	58	86	84
All Opioids	27	37	43
Rx. Opioids	23	36	40
Cocaine	8	5	5
Fentanyl	12	23	30
Heroin	5	3	6
Methamphetamine	13	31	30

Source: South Dakota Dept. of Health, Office of Health Statistics

(U) Conclusion

(U) Between 2018 and 2021, the number of fatal drug overdoses have significantly increased across Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and South Dakota. The increase in fatal drug overdoses are primary attributable to opioids and psychostimulants. **Seizures of cocaine, methamphetamine, and fentanyl by Midwest HIDTA law enforcement initiatives are positively correlated with the increase in drug overdose fatalities.** If Midwest HIDTA law enforcement initiatives continue to seize increased amounts of these drugs throughout 2022, it is likely that overdose deaths will continue to rise as the supply of these drugs to the region increases.