

# THE OPIOID CRISIS

## Impact on Native American Communities



### What are Opioids?

Opioids are a class of drugs that include illicitly manufactured drugs such as fentanyl and heroin, as well as pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, etc.

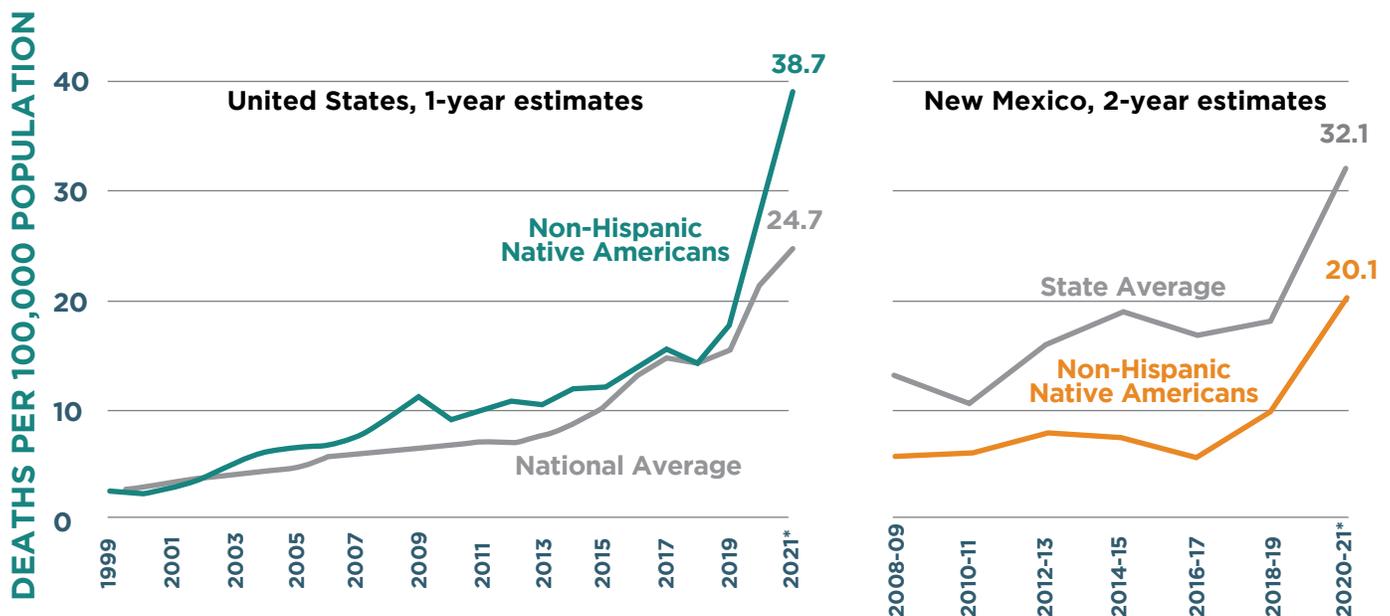
### Opioid misuse and addiction can lead to overdose and deaths.

Fentanyl overdoses are driving the recent and rapid increase in opioid-related deaths throughout the U.S., including Indian Country.

Opioid overdose deaths have been on the rise among Native Americans since 2000.

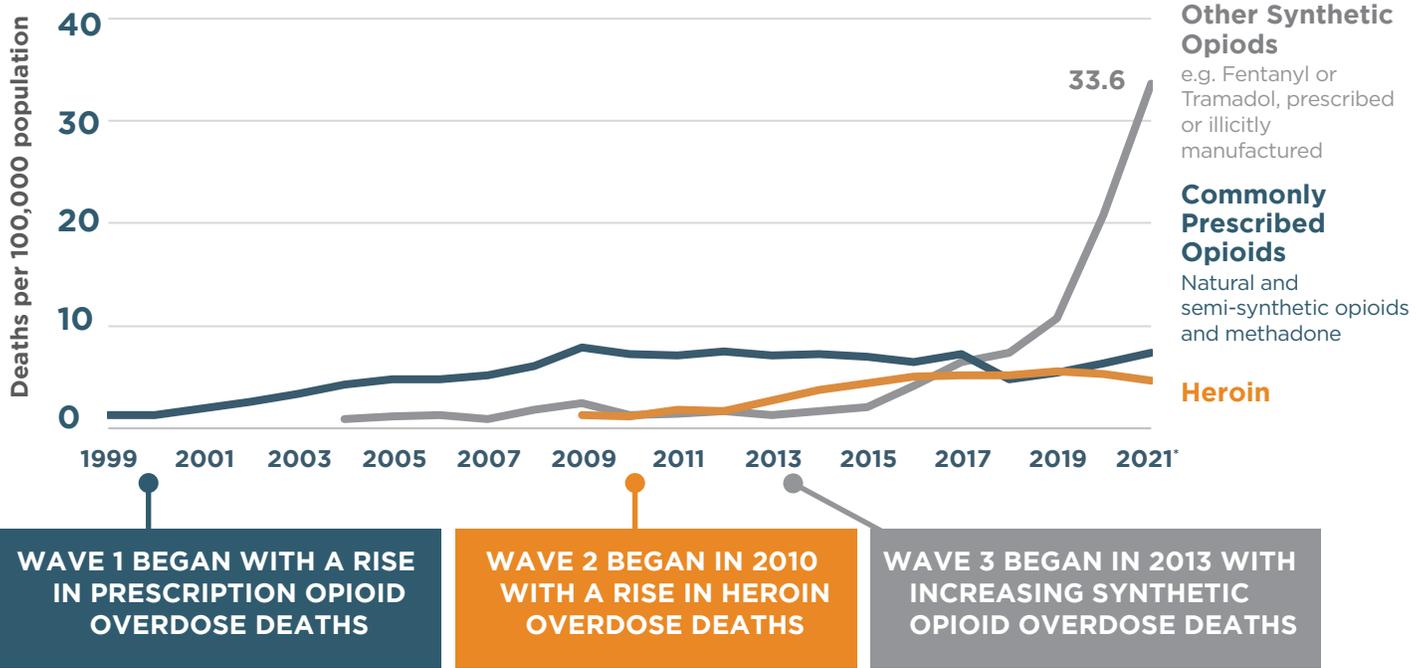
In 2021, the opioid-related overdose mortality rate for Native Americans was 38.7 deaths per 100,000 nationwide, which was higher than the national average, and 20.1 deaths per 100,000 in New Mexico, which was lower than the state average.

### OVERDOSE Deaths Involving Opioids 1999-2021



\*These estimates are based on 6 race categories while estimates for previous years are based on 4 race categories. The newer set of categories splits Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander into two categories, and it includes a category for more than one race.

## Three Waves of OPIOID Overdose Deaths among Non-Hispanic Native Americans, U.S.

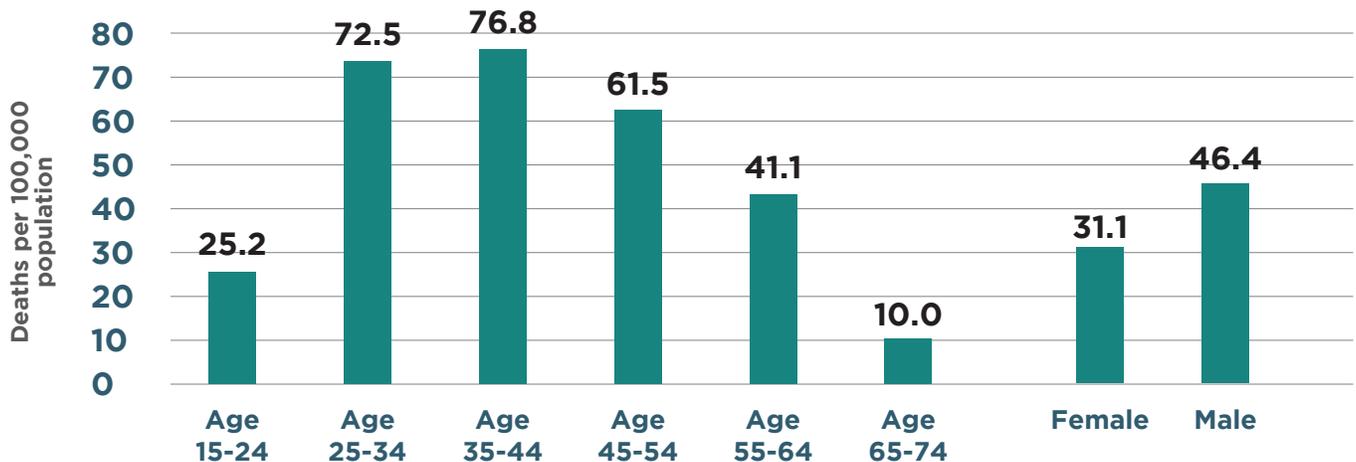


The rise in opioid overdose deaths occurred in three waves with the most recent wave caused by synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. Synthetic opioid deaths among Native Americans increased from 1.2 per 100,000 in 2013 to 33.6 per 100,000 in 2021.

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## Who is affected by opioid overdose?

### OPIOID Overdose Deaths among Non-Hispanic Native Americans by Sex & Age, U.S. 2021



The opioid overdose death rate among Native American males exceeds the rate among Native American females (46.4 vs 31.1 per 100,000). Opioid overdose deaths are most common among Native Americans 35-44 years old, followed by those who are 25-34 years old.

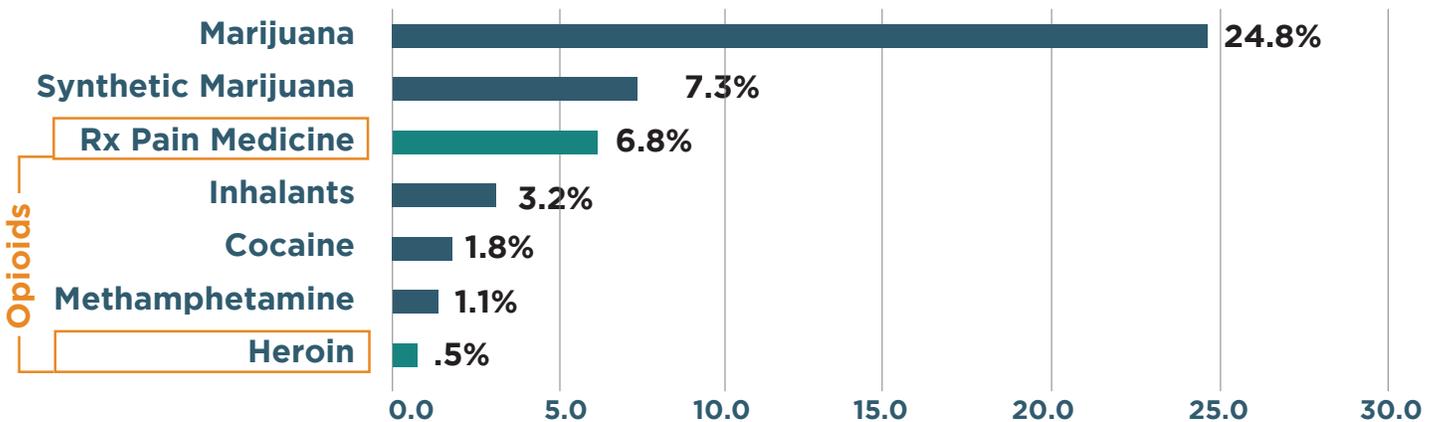
# What is Fentanyl?

Street names: Apache, China Girl, Jackpot, Dance Fever, and TNT.



## How are youth impacted?

### CURRENT Drug Use (Past 30 Days) Native American High School Students New Mexico 2021



In 2021, 6.8% of Native American high school students in New Mexico used prescription (Rx) pain medicine without a doctor’s order and 0.5% reported heroin use. Both prescription pain medicine and heroin use were lower in 2021 than in 2019.

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# How to Protect Yourself, Your Family and Our Community:



- **TALK TO YOUR KIDS.** Tell your children about how deadly opioid drugs can be. Children who learn about the risks of drugs at home are less likely to use drugs than those who don't. Surveys show that two-thirds of teens who misuse prescription painkillers got them from friends, family members, and acquaintances.



- **STORE SAFELY.** Keep opioids and other prescription medicine in a secure place. Count and monitor the number of pills you have and lock them up. Ask your friends, family members, and babysitters to do the same.



- **DISPOSE LEFTOVER PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION.** If you have unused prescription opioids at the end of your treatment, find your community drug take-back program or your pharmacy mail-back program.



- **TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR.** Discuss alternatives to opioids for pain relief with your doctor. Your doctor may suggest other non-addictive medicines or certain complementary and alternative treatments—such as acupuncture—as a first step for treating chronic pain.



- **TEST YOUR DRUGS FOR FENTANYL.** Knowing if your drugs contain fentanyl can lower your chances of overdosing. You can use fentanyl test strips to quickly and easily detect the presence of fentanyl in your drugs. You can buy test strips online at [DanceSafe.com](https://DanceSafe.com) or [BunkPolice.com](https://BunkPolice.com).



- **DON'T TAKE OPIOIDS WITH ALCOHOL AND OTHER MEDICATIONS.** Benzodiazepines (such as Xanax<sup>®</sup> and Valium<sup>®</sup>), muscle relaxants (such as Soma<sup>®</sup> or Flexeril<sup>®</sup>), hypnotics (such as Ambien<sup>®</sup> or Lunesta<sup>®</sup>), and/or other prescription opioids. These drugs and substances can enhance each other's effects, leading to dangerous intoxication and possible overdose.



- **ASK FOR HELP.** If you or a family member may be misusing opioids or developing an addiction, don't hesitate to seek help from your IHS, tribal health clinic or behavioral health program. Treatment options include counseling and medication assisted therapy. You can also call 988, the 24/7 nationwide helpline for emotional, mental or substance misuse support.



- **KNOW WHAT TO DO IN AN OVERDOSE EMERGENCY.** Ask your health provider about Naloxone, which can be used at home to prevent opioid overdose deaths. Always call 911 if you believe someone is experiencing an overdose.

Data Sources: Opioid overdose data: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2020 and 2018-2021 on CDC WONDER Online Database. UCD ICD-10 Codes: X40-X44, X60-X64, X85, Y10-14. MCD ICD-10 Codes: T40.1-40.4, T40.6. High school drug use: New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey 2021.

