

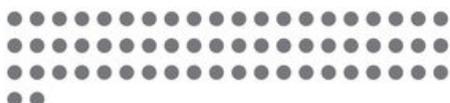
Michigan

As Kent County grapples with overdoses, it remains a national 'epidemic'

Kent County overdose deaths

Through September, Kent County has recorded 62 drug overdose deaths. Officials expect the year-end total to be nearer to the 109 overdose deaths seen in 2015

62 overall deaths



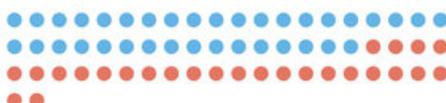
Youngest - 15



Oldest - 66

Source: Kent County Medical Examiner

36 males, 26 females



Heroin deaths - 14



Fentanyl deaths - 11



Methadone deaths - 8



Cocaine deaths - 7



Other overdoses - 22



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GRAND RAPIDS, MI -- While Kent County continues to grapple with the issue of drug abuse and dozens of overdose deaths each year, the problem remains a large one statewide.

Michigan's total drug overdose deaths have more than tripled over the last 15 years, rising from 455 in 1999 to 1,745 in 2014, according to data from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

The 2014 total marks a record high for the state, according to a [report by MLive's Brad Devereaux](#).



Heroin, opioid deaths up 10 times in Michigan over 15 years, search by county

Kent County alone counted 109 overdose deaths in 2015. Though the first nine months of 2016 produced a lower total, some local officials believe 2016 is on track to reach the same number of overdoses as last year.

Locally, overdoses has claimed the lives of those as young as 15 and as old as 66.

A 23-year-old West Catholic High School graduate is one of the most recent victims.

Meghan Reid was found dead on Oct. 30, just three days after her sister found her passed out and used the opioid reversal drug Naloxone, sold under the brand name Narcan, to revive her.

The Grand Rapids area, and Michigan in general, are by no means alone in their ongoing struggle with drug overdoses.

When taking into account population, Kent County ranked 26th among the state's 30 most populous counties for per-capita overdose deaths in 2014. Much higher per-capita overdose rates that year were seen in Muskegon, Macomb, St. Clair, Livingston and Wayne counties.

Overdose death totals for all 30 of those Michigan counties can be seen here:



See which Michigan counties had the most drug overdose deaths

Search the database MLive created using statewide data to see the number of drug overdose deaths from 1999 to 2014 in each Michigan county. Not Detroit has a separate entry and Wayne County's figure excludes Detroit.

County Name	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Search"/>	

Cloud Database by Caspio

Opioid-related deaths are defined as: opioid or without heroin or cocaine also present. Heroin-related deaths are defined as: heroin without opioid, and with or without cocaine.

The problem has also grown on the national level, with 47,055 drug overdose deaths occurring across in the United States in 2014. National statistics also show a 200 percent increase in overdose deaths involving opioid pain relievers and heroin between the years of 2000 and 2014.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention labels opioid overdoses a national "epidemic."

The increase in drug overdose deaths has prompted efforts by nonprofits and government at the national, state and local levels.



Michigan fights deadly heroin and opioid epidemic, here's 7 things to know

In June, Gov. Rick Snyder created the Michigan Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse Commission, tasked with tackling the state's epidemic.

Organizations like the Grand Rapids Red Project have overdose prevention efforts, including wide dispersal of Naloxone as a means of reversing drug overdoses.

Michigan State Police posts across the state serve as collection points for prescription drugs, an effort to get expired and unneeded prescription medication off the streets.

But as overdose deaths continue in Kent County and across the nation, some say much more still needs to be done.

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