

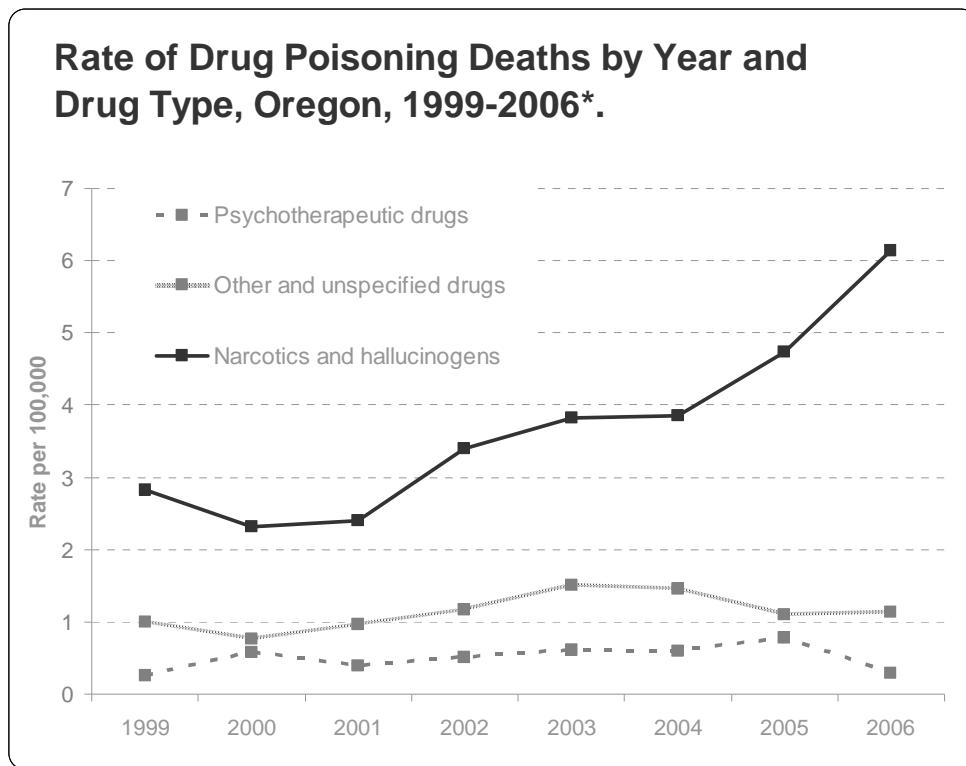
## Unintentional Drug Poisoning in Oregon—at a Glance

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- The rate of drug-related mortality and hospitalization has increased in recent years in Oregon.
- The rate of unintentional poisoning mortality associated with opioid drugs and methadone increased faster than any other types of drugs.
- Over 1,100 deaths among Oregonians in the past 5 years resulted from unintentional poisoning due to drugs and medicines.
- Nearly 4,000 hospitalizations in Oregon in the past 5 years were associated with unintentional poisoning due to drugs and medicines. This is not inclusive of patients treated and released from hospital emergency rooms.
- Among Oregonians 35-54 years of age, there were more unintentional poisoning deaths due to drugs and medicines in 2006 than deaths due to motor vehicle traffic.
- For children 1 to 4 years of age, poisoning is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of injury hospitalization.
- It is not known how many deaths and hospitalizations are due to abuse or misuse of prescription drugs.

## Mortality

- Data obtained from death certificates show an increase of over 100% in the rate of narcotic associated poisoning deaths between 1999 and 2006—more than any other category of drug; much of the increase was associated with drugs that treat pain. This was an increase from 93 deaths in 1999 to 232 in 2006\*.
- The rate of mortality in Oregon among 45-54 year-olds due to narcotic-associated poisoning increased faster than any other age group between 1999 and 2006. There was over a three-fold increase in the number of deaths among 45-54 year-olds during this period, from 23 deaths in 1999 to 86 in 2006\*.

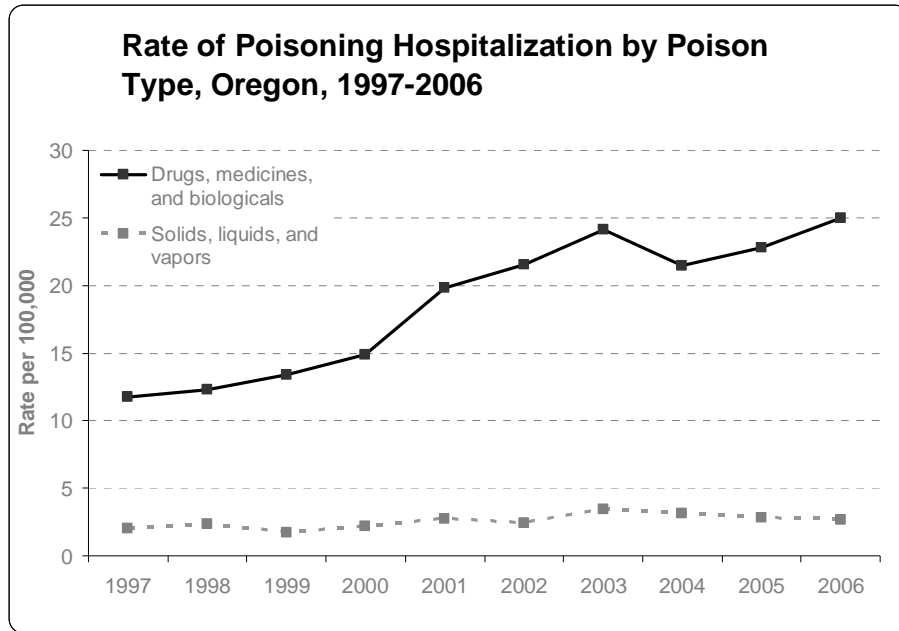


Data source: Oregon Center for Health Statistics mortality data

\* 2006 data are provisional—records do not include deaths of Oregon residents that occurred out-of-state.

## Hospitalizations

**Unintentional poisoning hospitalizations due to drugs and medicines have increased over 100% in the past 10 years, even as poisonings due to other causes (such as chemicals and gases) remained virtually unchanged.**



The number of hospitalizations due to unintentional poisoning by drugs and medicines

Year	Number
1997	382
1998	405
1999	448
2000	514
2001	694
2002	764
2003	863
2004	779
2005	842
2006	943

Although the graph above shows the trend for all drugs and medicines, hospitalizations due to specific types of some drugs and medicines have increased at an even greater rate:

- Hospitalizations due to opiates and related narcotics (not including methadone and heroin), which includes typical prescription “painkillers” increased over 500% in 10 years.

## Costs

**The costs of unintentional poisoning hospitalizations due to drugs and medicines have increased over the past decade.** The costs for specific types of drugs—such as opiates—have increased at a greater rate compared to all drugs and medicines. Hospitalization charges due to all drugs and medicines increased from \$1.4 million in 1997 to \$10.7 million in 2006—a seven-fold increase in costs.

- Hospitalization charges due to all analgesics, antipyretics, and antirheumatics<sup>‡</sup> increased from \$430,000 in 1997 to \$4.9 million in 2006—an 11-fold increase.
- Hospitalization charges due to opiates and related narcotics increased from \$93,000 in 1997 to \$2.1 million in 2006—a 22-fold increase in 10 years. In 1997, unintentional poisonings due to opiates and related narcotics accounted for approximately 7% of total hospitalization costs due to unintentional poisoning; in 2006, these drugs counted for about 20% of those costs.

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Data source: Oregon Hospital Discharge Index.

<sup>‡</sup> A category that includes fever reducers, anti-inflammatory drugs, and “painkillers”.