

SUDORS INFORMATION BRIEF

Drug overdose is a public health crisis that effects individuals, families and communities. In 2020, there were more than 93,000 drug overdose deaths in the United States (U.S.), according to National Center for Health Statistics. The majority of drug overdose deaths in the U.S. are opioid involved.

To help find ways to prevent drug overdose deaths it is important that we know the facts behind these deaths. The Statewide Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS) helps us understand emerging trends and factors leading up to the overdose and can be used to develop prevention approaches.

SUDORS is part of the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) effort funded by the [Centers of Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). Illinois SUDORS is housed at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, in the Buehler Center for Health Policy and Economics. To operate SUDORS on behalf of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Northwestern University serves as a bona fide agent of IDPH.

Illinois is one of 32 states and Washington, D.C., funded by the CDC to collect data on drug overdose deaths. Data come from death certificates, medical examiner/coroner, toxicology and autopsy reports.

THERE ARE INSTANCES IN WHICH DATA MAY BE ABSENT, INCOMPLETE, OR UNRELIABLE. THIS MAY BE DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE DEATHS AND IS NOT RELATED TO DATA COLLECTION. FOR EXAMPLE, IF THERE ARE NO WITNESSES PRESENT, THERE MAY BE VERY LITTLE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ABOUT THE FATAL OVERDOSE EVENT.

What does SUDORS include?

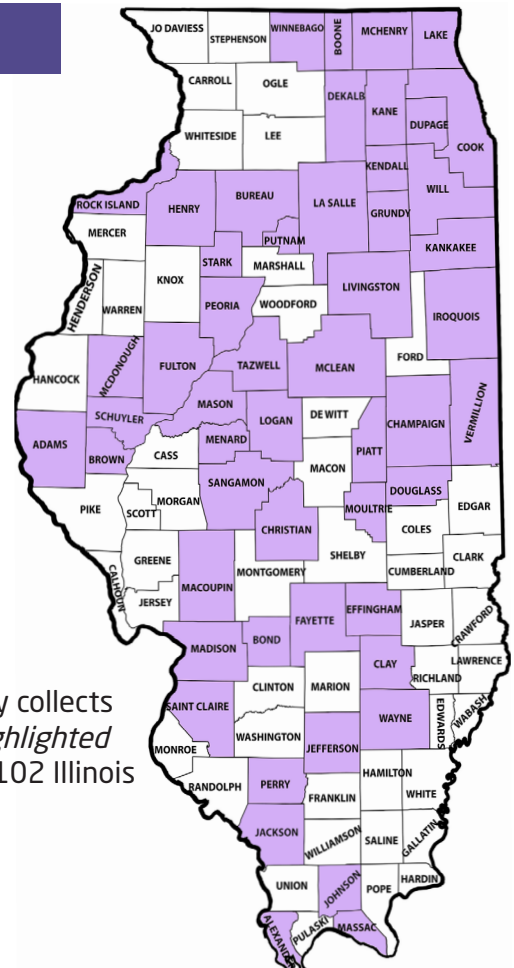
SUDORS CASE CRITERIA

Cases Include: all deaths due to unintentional drug poisonings in SUDORS participating counties. Intentional (suicide or homicide) drug poisoning cases can be found at Illinois Violent Death Reporting System (IVDRS)

bit.ly/IVDRS750

VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS

Age, sex, gender, race/ethnicity, height, weight, marital status, relationship status, sex of partner, sexual orientation.



SUDORS currently collects data from 52 (highlighted in purple) of the 102 Illinois counties.

VICTIM RESIDENCE AND OCCUPATION, AND EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Country, state, county, city, zip code, U.S. Census tract and U.S. Census block group of victim's residence, whether or not the victim is homeless, birthplace, kind of business/industry, usual and current occupation, veteran status, education level by degree, and the number of years.

INJURY AND DEATH DETAILS

Manner of death, state, county, city, zip code, U.S. Census tract and U.S. Census block group where injury occurred, type of place where injury occurred, date of injury, time of injury, EMS presence at scene of injury, survival time post-injury, whether the injury occurred at work or the victim's home, whether the victim was in custody when the overdose occurred, bystanders present, administration of naloxone (opioid overdose reversal agent) route of ingestion, evidence of rapid overdose and more.

PERCIPITATING FACTORS

Whether or not victim was seen in an emergency department, whether victim was admitted to inpatient care. Recent release from an institution (jail, hospital, treatment whether or not the victim experienced a relationship, financial, legal, health or substance use problem prior to the death, and whether or not in the two weeks preceding their death, the problem was considered a crisis.

Additional SUDORS data

TOXICOLOGY *(substances tested for varies by county)*

Toxicology testing results for presence of 1,300 separate substances. These include but are not limited to alcohol, carbon monoxide, amphetamines, anticonvulsants, antidepressants, antipsychotics, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, muscle relaxants, opiates and synthetic opioids, and methamphetamines. Toxicology data on drugs used to treat substance use disorder including benzodiazepines, nalaxtrone, methadone and buphenorphine.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE HISTORY

Prior overdoses, recent relapses, history of drug misuse.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

These include presence of a past or current diagnosed mental health or substance use problem, history of ever receiving mental health/substance abuse treatment. Physical health problems including acute and chronic conditions such as cancer, COPD, and diabetes.

RELATIONSHIP AND LIFE STRESSORS

These include presence of intimate partner or family relationship problem and financial, employment, school, legal or housing problems.

In addition to structured variables, SUDORS includes a *narrative account of the fatal overdose incident written by Data Abstractors

**Descriptive Content (narrative): Written by data abstractors, narratives tell the story of and provide context for understanding the violent death incident. Narratives can capture the sequence of events leading up to the fatal overdose as well as other contextual information.*

Requesting SUDORS data

The goal of SUDORS is to provide data for drug overdose death prevention. You may want to request SUDORS data if you are a policy maker, researcher, work with community organizations or an overdose prevention initiative or a member of the media. Any parties interested in requesting SUDORS data should be aware of the following:

- Anyone can request aggregated data tables at bit.ly/SUDORS750
- Data will be provided as aggregated numbers only; individual-level data will not be provided
- Cell counts in which there are fewer than five cases are suppressed for privacy protection purposes.
- Data reports availability are dependent on SUDORS resources to produce.
- Local organizations can request a data presentation by one of our community outreach coordinators.

RESEARCHERS:

For case level data sharing, a formal agreement must be arranged between the requestor's institution, Buehler Center for Health Policy & Economics, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University and the Illinois Department of Public Health. SUDORS must be appropriately cited on all work.

FOR SUDORS DATA PROVIDERS:

Data providers can request aggregated data for their jurisdiction for use in local overdose prevention efforts at bit.ly/SUDORS750

- We can assist in selecting data to evaluate intervention and prevention efforts
- Data providers can request a presentation by our community outreach coordinators

FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

SUDORS has supported community groups and naloxone distribution organizations by providing block level density maps to help pin-point overdose hotspots for resource allocation.

For more information on the Statewide Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System, please contact:

Maryann Mason, PhD
Principal Investigator
312.503.5142
maryann-mason@northwestern.edu

Buehler Center for Health Policy and Economics
Feinberg School of Medicine
Northwestern University
750 N. Lakeshore Drive
Chicago, IL 60611-2991



Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/SUDORS10



Subscribe to our Youtube
youtube.com/SUDORS



Visit us at our website
bit.ly/SUDORS750