

# THE OPIOID CRISIS

## Impact on Native American Communities



### What are Opioids?

Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, etc.

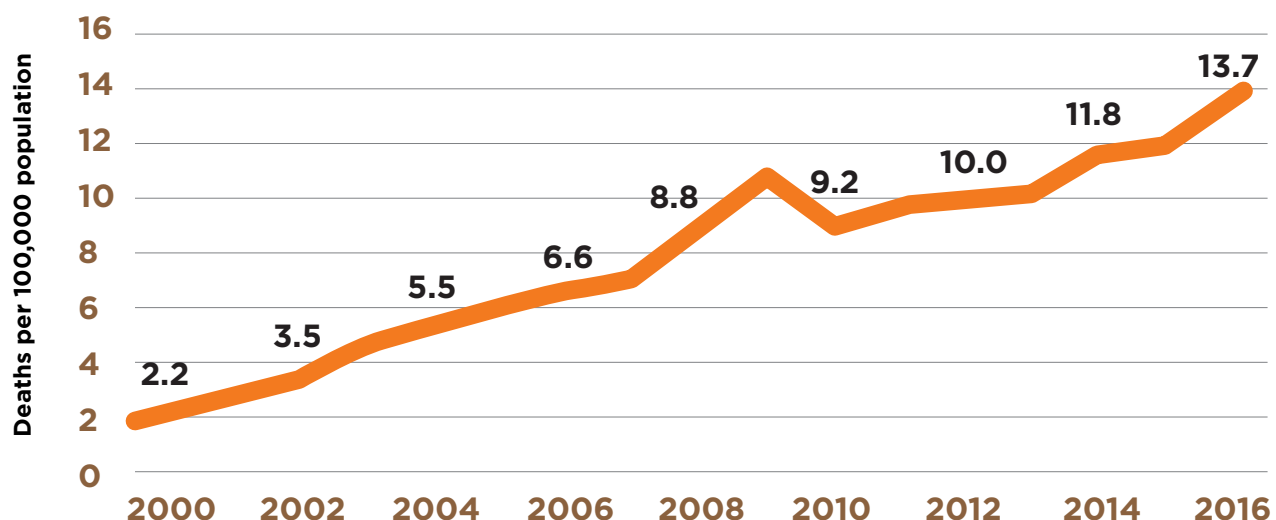
**The misuse of and addiction to opioids can lead to overdose and deaths.**

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

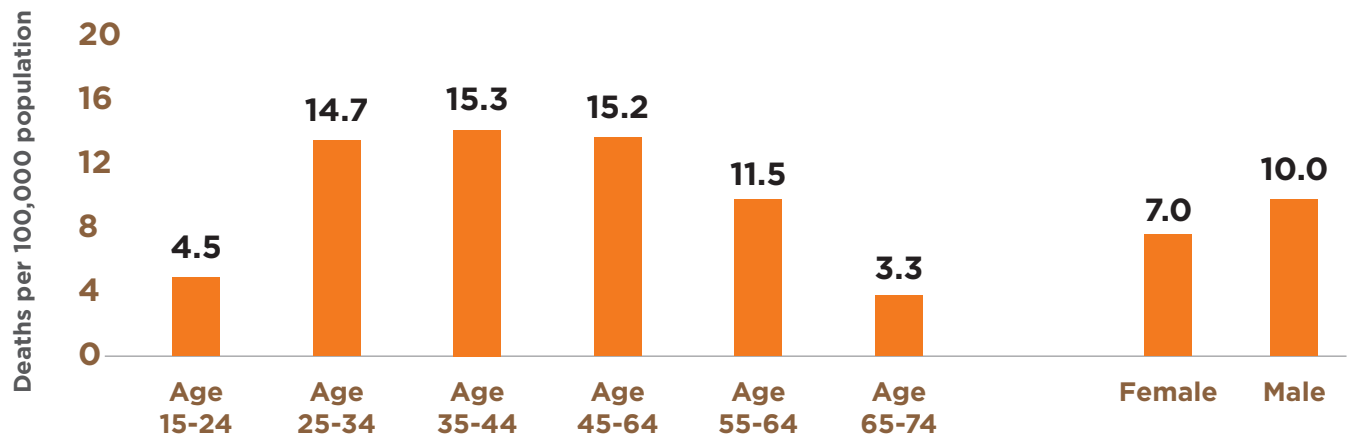
**Overdose deaths due to any type of opioid use have been on the rise among Native Americans since 2000.**

The current opioid-related overdose death rate is 13.7 deaths per 100,000 Native Americans, which exceeds the national rate of 13.1 per 100,000.

### OVERDOSE Deaths Involving Opioids among Native Americans U.S. 2000-2016



## OPIOID Overdose Deaths among Native Americans by Sex & Age, U.S. 2014-2016



The opioid overdose death rate among Native American males significantly exceeds the rate among Native American females (10.0 per 100,000 vs. 7.0 per

100,000). Opioid overdose deaths are significantly more common among Native Americans between the ages of 25-64.

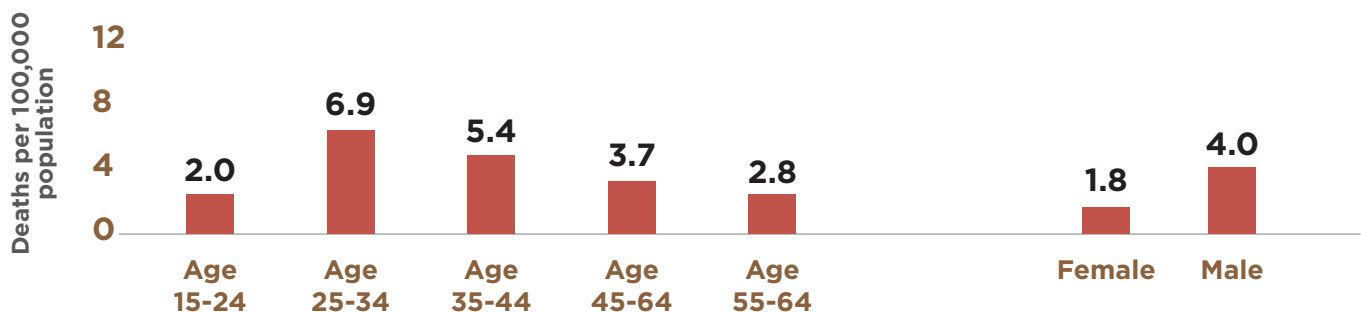
SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2016 on CDC WONDER Online Database



## Heroin

Heroin is an illegal drug derived from opium which people inject, sniff, snort, or smoke. **Some street names for heroin include: smack, dope, China white, and tar.**

## HEROIN Overdose Deaths among Native Americans by Sex & Age, U.S. 2014-2016



More than twice as many Native American men (4.0 per 100,000) die from a heroin overdose than Native American women (1.8 per 100,000).

The most common age groups when heroin overdose deaths occur are during ages 25-34 (6.9 per 100,000) and ages 35-44 (5.4 per 100,000).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2016 on CDC WONDER Online Database.

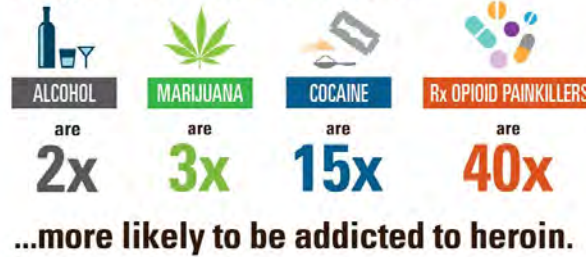
## Heroin use is part of a larger substance abuse problem.

Nearly all people who used heroin also used at least 1 other drug.

Most used at least **3** other drugs.

**Heroin** is a highly addictive opioid drug with a high risk of overdose and **death** for users.

### People who are addicted to...



SOURCE: National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2011-2013.

More than 1 in 5 Native American high school students who used a prescription pain medication (Rx Pain Killer) without a doctor's order also used heroin in the past 30 days (22%).



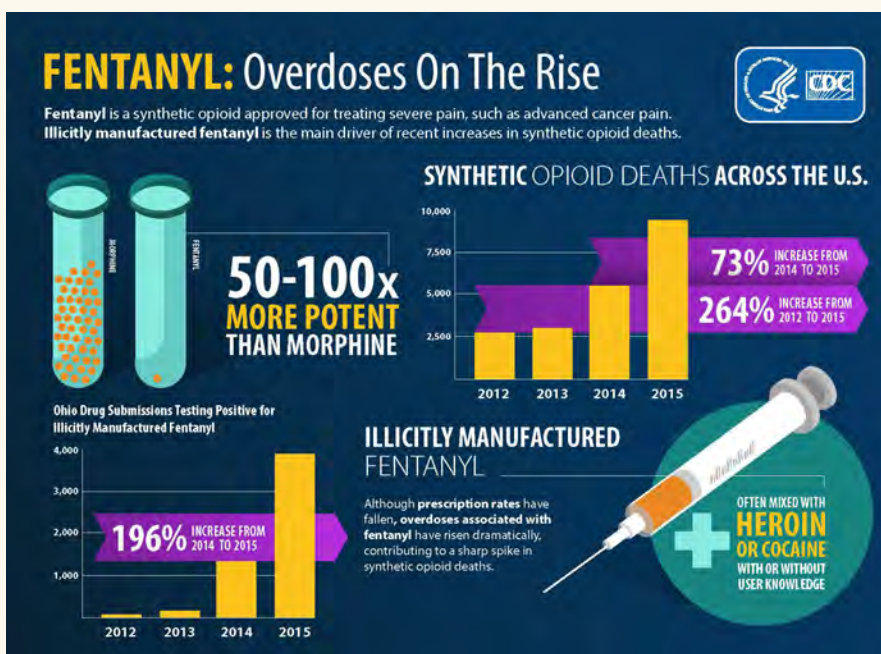
## Fentanyl

Fentanyl is a synthetic (man-made) opioid that is 50x more potent than heroin and 100x more potent than morphine. There are two types of fentanyl:

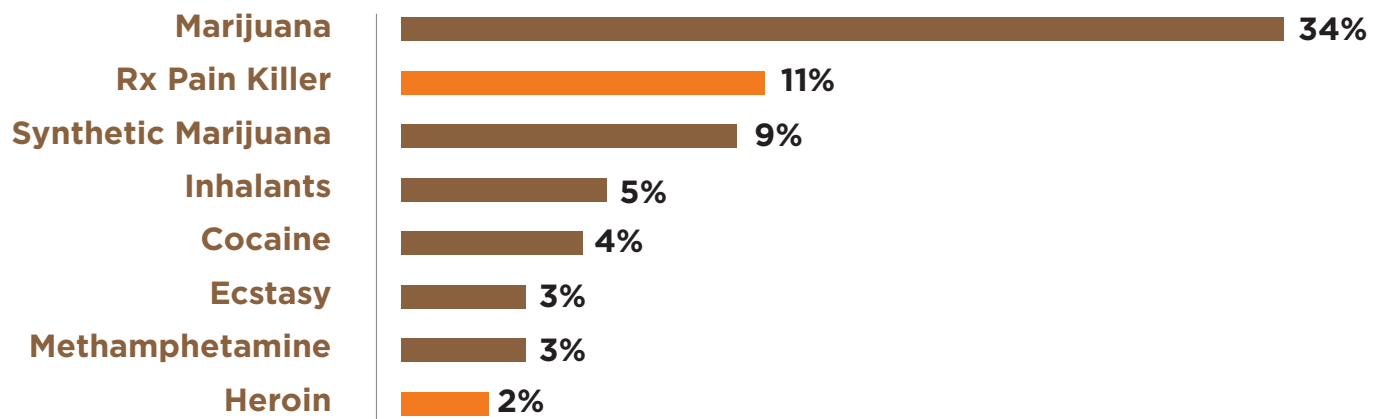
**Pharmaceutical fentanyl**, which is primarily prescribed to manage acute and chronic pain associated with advanced cancer.

**Non-pharmaceutical fentanyl**, which is illicitly manufactured, and is often mixed with heroin and/or cocaine—with or without the user's knowledge—in order to increase the drug's effect.

Some street names for fentanyl include: *Apache, China Girl, Jackpot, Dance Fever, and TNT.*



## CURRENT Drug Use (Past 30 Days) Native American High School Students New Mexico 2015



More than 1 in 10 Native American high school students in New Mexico (11%) used a prescription pain medication (Rx Pain

Killer) without a doctor's order in the past 30 days. Approximately, 2% reported current heroin use.

Source: New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey 2015

### 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.
- **SAFE STORAGE.** 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, or follow guidance for disposal at home (i.e., flushing down toilet).
- **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.
- **DON'T TAKE OPIOIDS WITH ALCOHOL AND OTHER MEDICATIONS** like 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 or tribal health clinic or behavioral health program. Treatment options include counseling and medication assisted therapy.
- **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.

