

# Emergency Department Overdoses

In Vermonters under age 25, 2021-2025.

July 2026

Unintentional overdoses pose unique health risks for Vermont youth. Between 2021 and 2025, 2,146 Vermonters under the age of 25, defined in this brief as youth, received emergency department (ED) treatment due to an unintentional overdose. Most ED visits for overdoses in this age group are nonfatal. Preteens and older elementary schoolers tend to have lower rates of ED overdose visits compared to older youth and young adults.

Vermont ED data from the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) were used to identify unintentional nonfatal overdoses involving cannabis, prescription medication (e.g., atorvastatin, levothyroxine, metformin, lisinopril, and amlodipine), over the counter (OTC) medication (e.g., Tylenol®, Advil®, melatonin, Claritin®, and Nyquil®), illicit opioids, and stimulant drugs among youth. An overdose is a poisoning caused by drugs rather than any potentially toxic substance (e.g., cleaning agents and pesticides). This analysis does not include intentional (suicide and self-harm related) poisonings.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact

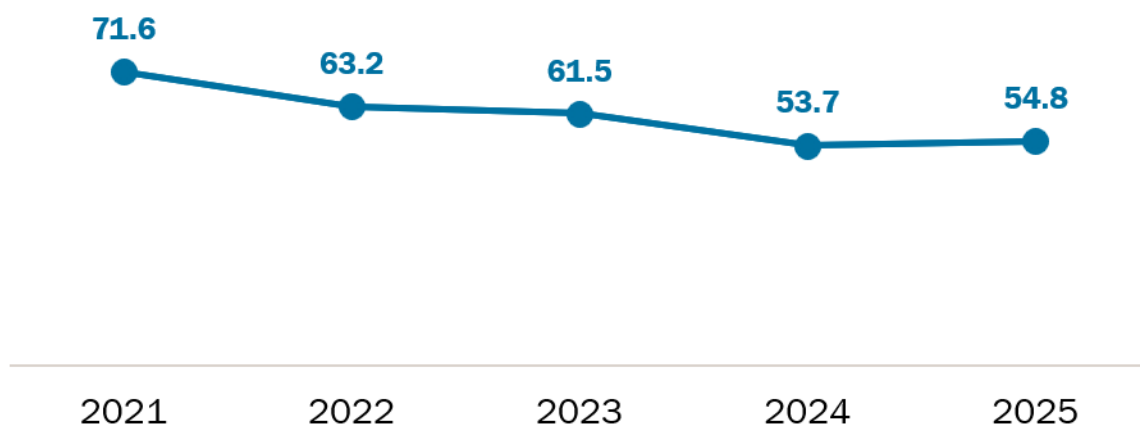
[AHS.VDHOVerdoseDataVT@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHOVerdoseDataVT@vermont.gov).

## Rate of ED overdoses among youth decreased over 5 years.

- There was a statistically significant decrease in ED visits for overdose between 2021 and 2025 among youth.

**From 2021 to 2025, rates of ED visits for drug overdoses among youth decreased from 71.6 to 54.8 overdoses.**

Rate per 10,000 all-cause ED visits



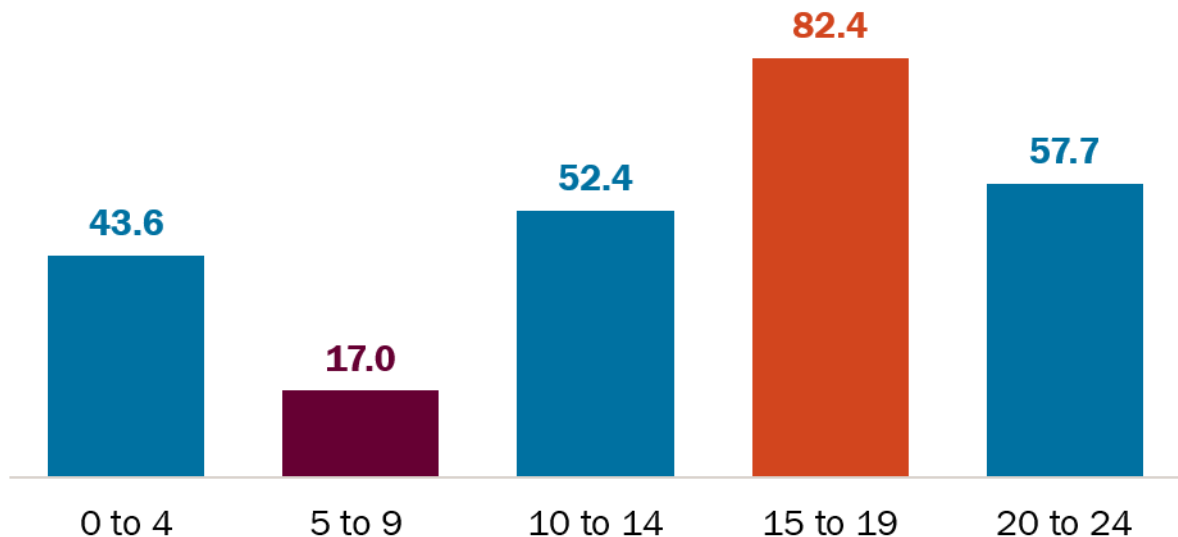
**HealthVermont.gov**  
802-863-7200



## Emergency department overdoses varied by age category in 2025.

In 2025, the rate of unintentional nonfatal overdose visits was **highest among those 15–19 years old** and **lowest among those 5-9 years old**.

Rate per 10,000 all-cause ED visits



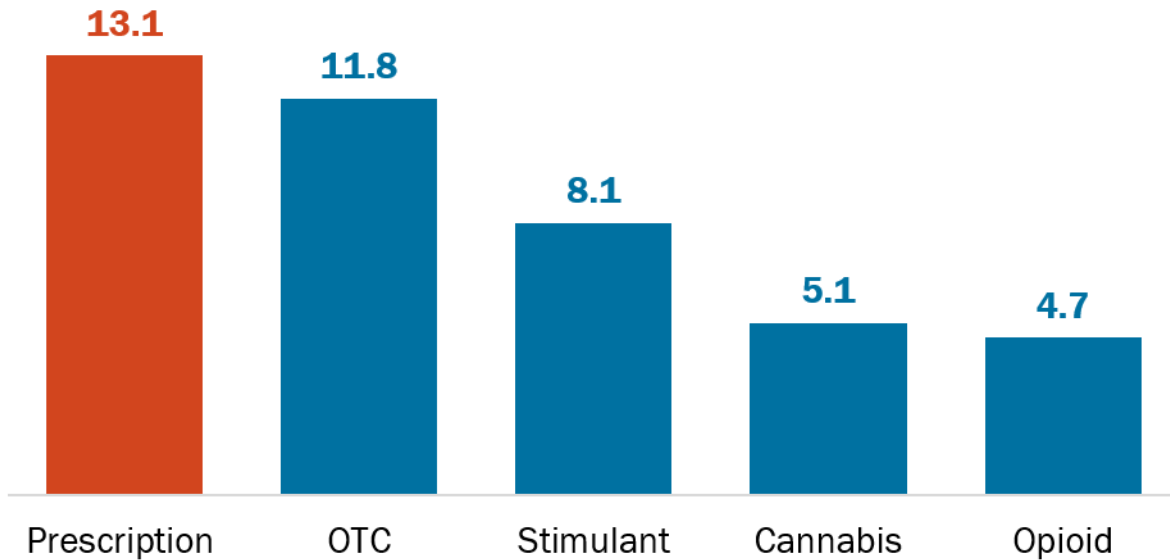
The most common substances involved in overdose ED visits varied across age groups. Prescription drugs were the most common overall.

- Among those 0-4 years old, prescription drugs were the most common category seen in ED overdoses in 2025 at a rate of 11.6 per 10,000 all-cause ED visits.
- Among those 5-9 years old, OTC and prescription drugs were the most common categories seen in ED overdoses in 2025. Both rates required suppression due to counts under 6.
- Among those 10-14 years old, OTC drugs were the most common category seen in ED overdoses in 2025 at a rate of 10.3 per 10,000 all-cause ED visits.
- Among those 15-19 years old, prescription drugs were the most common category seen in ED overdoses in 2025 at a rate of 23.0 per 10,000 all-cause ED visits.
- Among those 20-24 years old, prescription drugs were the most common category seen in ED overdoses in 2025 at a rate of 12.6 per 10,000 all-cause ED visits.

## Rates of different substance-specific ED overdoses varied in 2025.

**In 2025, prescription drugs were the most common substances involved in ED visits for overdose among youth, with a rate of 13.1 prescription drug overdoses.**

Rate per 10,000 all-cause ED visits



- These categories are not mutually exclusive. For example, prescription drugs include certain stimulant and opioid drugs. Likewise, the stimulant and opioid categories include both prescribed and illicit drugs.
- Those 15-19 years old had the highest rate of prescription, OTC, stimulant, and cannabis ED overdoses out of all age groups in 2025.
- Those 20-24 years old had the highest rate of opioid ED overdoses out of all age groups in 2025.

## Get Help Right Now...

**Substance Use Support:** Whether someone is seeking help for themselves or someone they care about, VT Helplink can connect them to the services they need. VT Helplink is a free resource for Vermonters, providing confidential, non-judgmental support and referrals to treatment, recovery, and other services. Helplink Specialists can help navigate Vermont's treatment and recovery system, whether or not someone has insurance. Visit [VTHelplink.org](https://vthelplink.org) or call [802-565-LINK \(5465\)](tel:802-565-LINK) or toll-free [833-565-LINK \(5465\)](tel:833-565-LINK). The helpline and online chats are available 24 hours a day, everyday.



**Resources for Parents:** [ParentUp | Mental Wellness and Substance Use Tools for Parents](#).

Information on Safe Storage and Drug Disposal Options Like Mail-Back Envelopes, Local Drop-Off Kiosks and Semi-Annual Take Back Days: [Prescription Drug Disposal | Vermont Department of Health](#)

- **Order Free Storage to Prevent Access to Drugs:** [vadic.vthelplink.org: Storage Bag with Combination Lock](https://vadic.vthelplink.org: Storage Bag with Combination Lock)

Information on How You Can Respond to an Overdose: [Respond to Overdose | Vermont Department of Health](#)

- **Order Free Overdose Reversal Nasal Spray, Naloxone:** [vadic.vthelplink.org: Overdose Prevention Kit](https://vadic.vthelplink.org: Overdose Prevention Kit)

**For More Substance Use and Mental Health Support**, review [this collection of Vermont resources](#) to support youth.