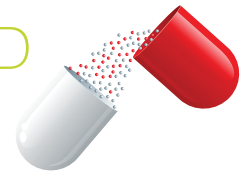


DEADLIEST DRUG EPIDEMIC ON RECORD IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY



The United States is confronting the deadliest drug crisis on record. (CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION, 2016)

Drug overdoses, mostly caused by opioids, end far too many lives too soon. More than 47,055 families lost loved ones in 2014 to a drug overdose. Opioid pain medications like Vicodin (hydrocodone), OxyContin (oxycodone) or Fentanyl accounted for 18,893 deaths.

(CDC NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS, 2015)

According to the CDC, the increase in opioid-related fatalities and treatment admissions parallels the increase in sales of opioid pain relievers. (PAULOZZI, JONES, MACK, & RUDD, 2011) Opioid prescribing remains high, with more than 259 million prescriptions written in 2012.

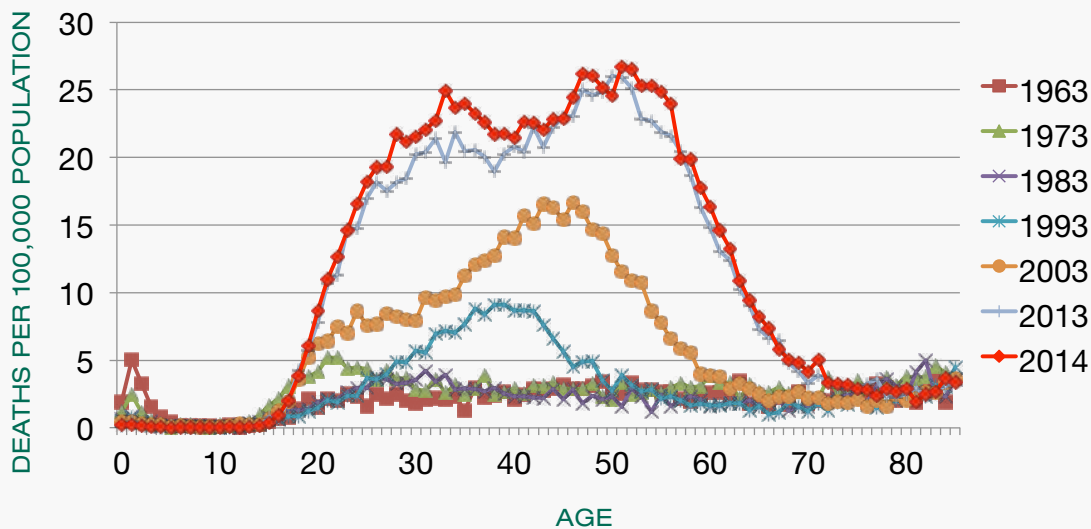
(PAULOZZI, MACK, & HOCKENBERRY, VITAL SIGNS: VARIATION AMONG STATES IN PRESCRIBING OF OPIOID PAIN RELIEVERS AND BENZODIAZEPINES—UNITED STATES, 2012, 2014)

Opioid pain medications, if taken too long or at a high daily dose, can have deadly and life-changing consequences even when used under the care of a medical professional.

The drug problems of past decades pale when compared to the current opioid epidemic which has killed 165,000 Americans from 2000 to 2014.

Poisoning Death Rates by Age

This graphic shows the rate of poisoning deaths has changed in the past fifty years. In 1963, poisoning deaths peaked in early childhood causing 5 deaths per every 100,000 people.



Today, there has been a **550 percent increase** in the age-adjusted death rate of Americans killed by poisoning. These deaths, primarily from an overdose of an opioid pain medication or heroin, peak around age 50 with a secondary peak around age 30. Especially troubling is that these deaths span from ages 20-70 as it shows an increase in the rate of poisoning death for nearly all working adults.

FACT

➤ From 1963 to 2014 the age adjusted death rate for poisoning increased **550%** from 2.0 to 13.0.

