

Unintentional Drug Poisoning Deaths Dallas County 1997-2016

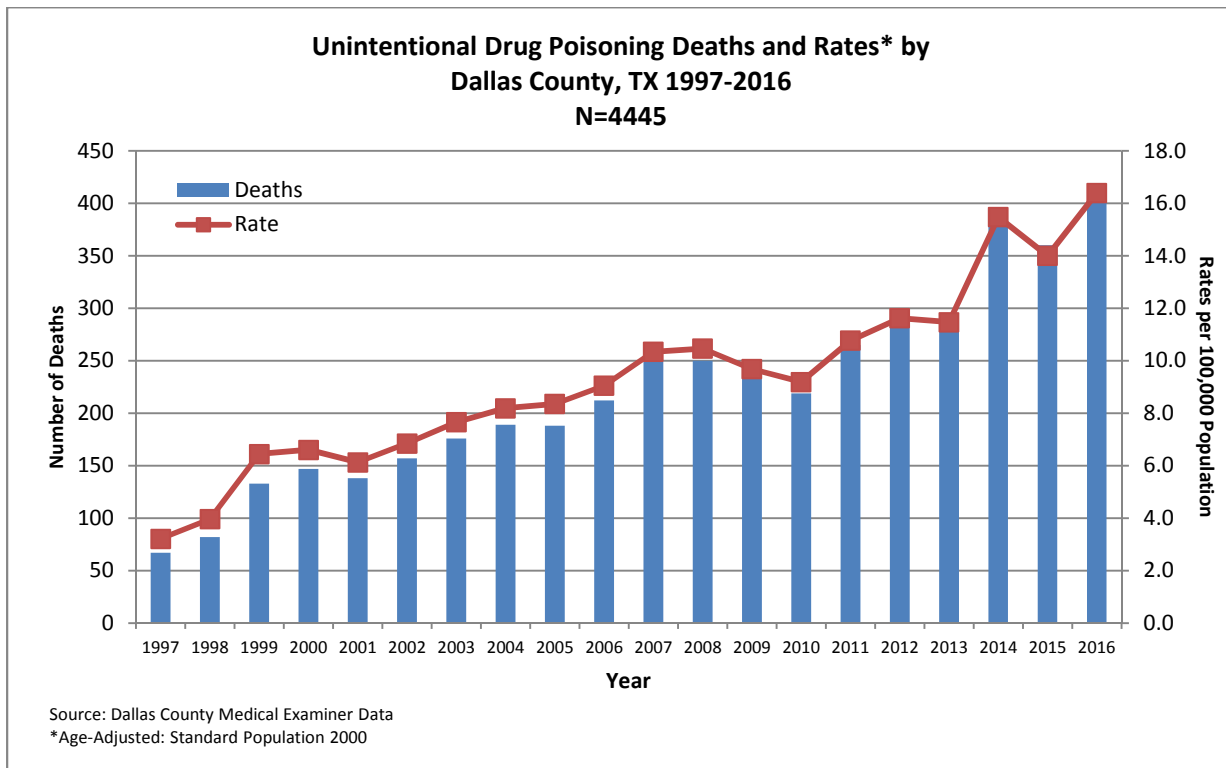
From 1997-2016, there were 4498 unintentional poisoning deaths in Dallas County. Unintentional poisoning deaths made up one of every 3.5 unintentional injury deaths. Ninety-nine percent of the poisoning deaths involved some type of drug.

For this analysis, we performed a detailed review of unintentional drug poisoning deaths for every year from 1997-2016. Non drug-related deaths such as carbon monoxide poisoning, ingestion of anti-freeze and the inhalation of various gases were excluded from the analysis, leaving 4028 drug-related deaths.

Unintentional drug poisoning deaths were defined based on the Medical Examiner’s ruling on manner and cause of death. For those years, cause of death was categorized into the following drug types: heroin, cocaine, alcohol, methamphetamine, opiates, opioid prescription drugs, benzodiazepines, other and mixed drugs. The “other” category includes other specific drugs not part of opioid prescription drugs or benzodiazepines drug categories, as well as over the counter medicine.

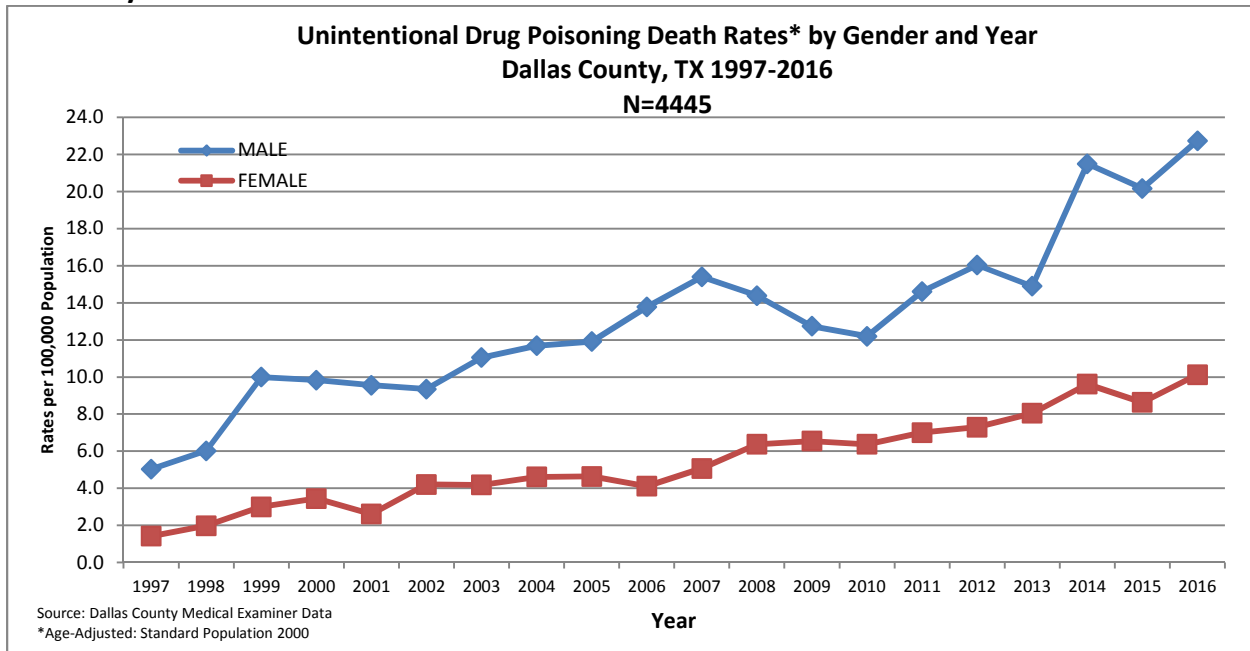
These categories were also collapsed into three broad categories: illegal/illicit drugs, prescription drugs and other drugs. “Other Drugs” included over-the-counter medication, alcohol, opiates, mixed drugs, drug overdoses etc. Each drug poisoning death may have mentioned multiple drug types, so totals of the various drugs will exceed the numbers of deaths.

Drug Poisoning Deaths, 1997-2016



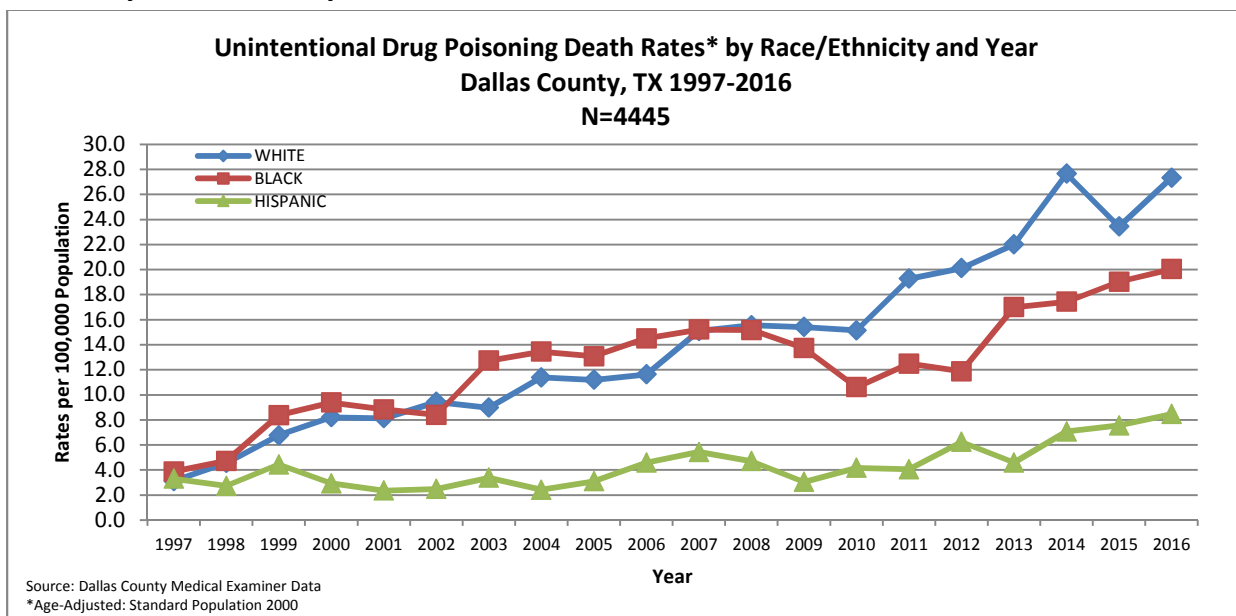
The number of deaths has increased 6-fold during this time period. This increase is statistically significant.

Deaths by Gender



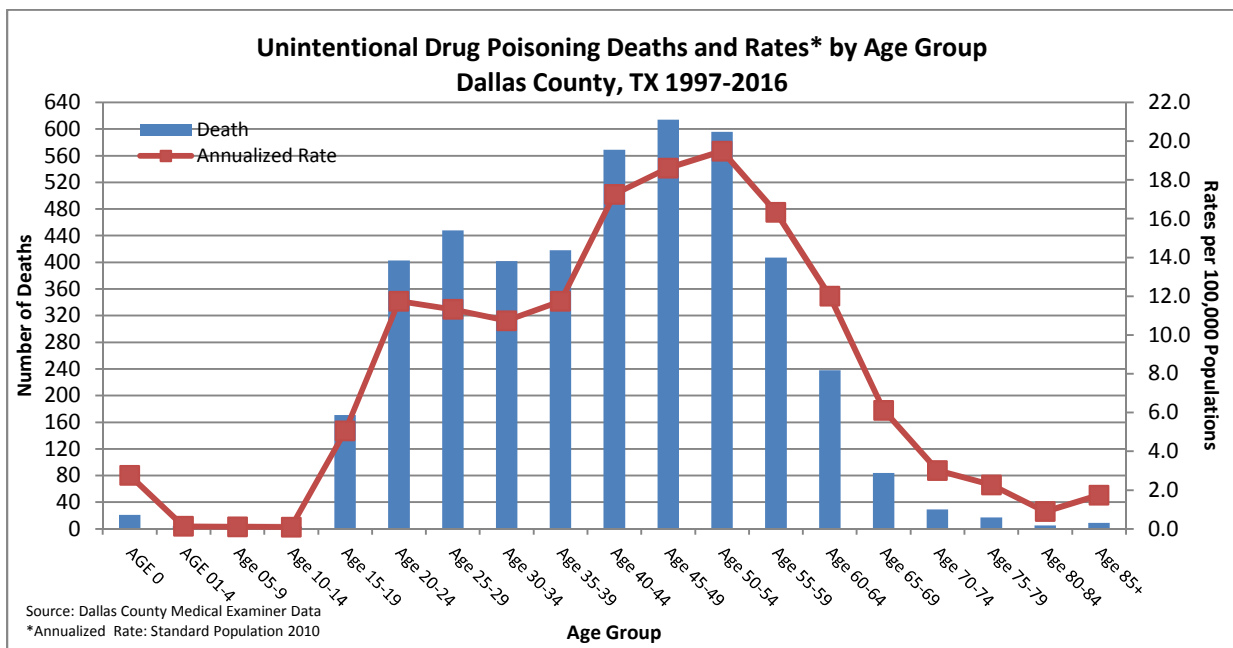
Seventy-one percent of the unintentional drug poisoning deaths were male. The death rates for males have increased almost 5-fold from 1997 to 2016. For females, the death rate has increased over 7-fold during the same time period.

Deaths by Race/Ethnicity



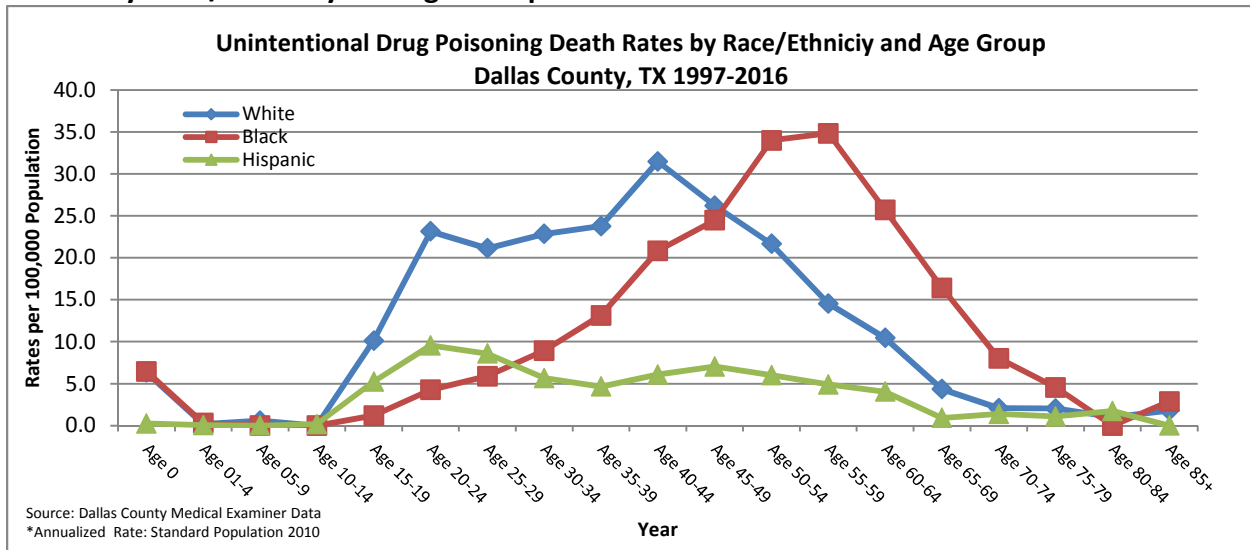
This graph looks at the trends in unintentional drug poisoning death rates by race/ethnicity. Fifty-three percent of the deaths were among whites, 28% were among blacks, and 18% were Hispanic. Among the white population, the death rate has increased 8-fold, while it has increased 5-fold among blacks. The increase for whites and blacks are statistically significant.

Deaths by Age Group



The average age of persons dying from drug poisoning was 41 years, and ranged was from 0 to 108 years. The majority of drug poisoning deaths (59%) occurred between ages 35-59. The highest death rates were for age group 50-54.

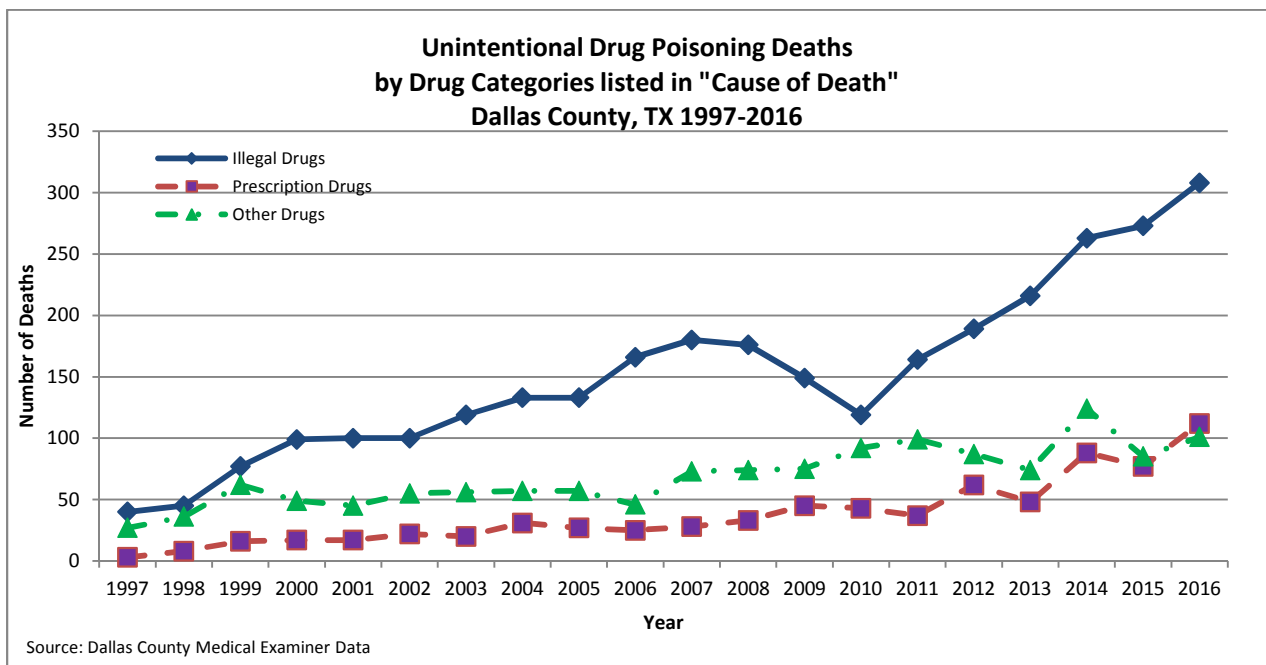
Deaths by Race/Ethnicity and Age Group



There is a different age profile of unintentional poisoning death rates by race. For the white population, there are two peaks: the 20-24 age group, and 40-44 age group. Among the black population, the highest death rate was among ages 55-59. Among the Hispanic population, the death rate peaked at ages 20-24.

Deaths by category of drug

In Dallas County, “illegal drugs” was the leading category listed under cause of death. This contrasts with data from the U.S as a whole, where in 2015, “prescription drugs” were the leading cause of drug poisoning deaths. In Dallas County, Illegal drugs have accounted for the majority of poisoning deaths since 1997. Cocaine was the leading drug mentioned, followed by heroin.



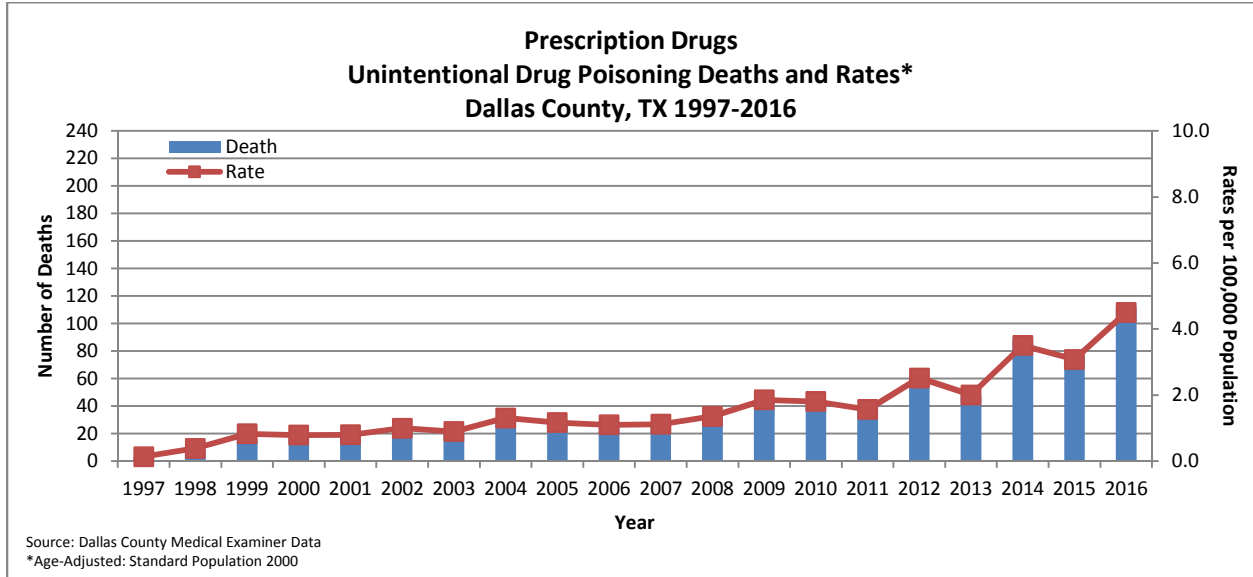
Drug Poisoning Deaths by Drug Group* and by year

	Illegal Drugs	Prescription Drugs	Other Drugs
1997	40	3	27
1998	47	8	37
1999	77	16	62
2000	99	17	49
2001	100	17	45
2002	100	22	55
2003	120	20	56
2004	133	31	57
2005	133	27	57
2006	166	25	46
2007	180	28	73
2008	177	33	75
2009	149	45	75
2010	120	43	92
2011	164	37	99
2012	189	62	87
2013	216	48	74
2014	263	88	124
2015	273	77	85
2016	308	112	101
Total	3049	759	1374

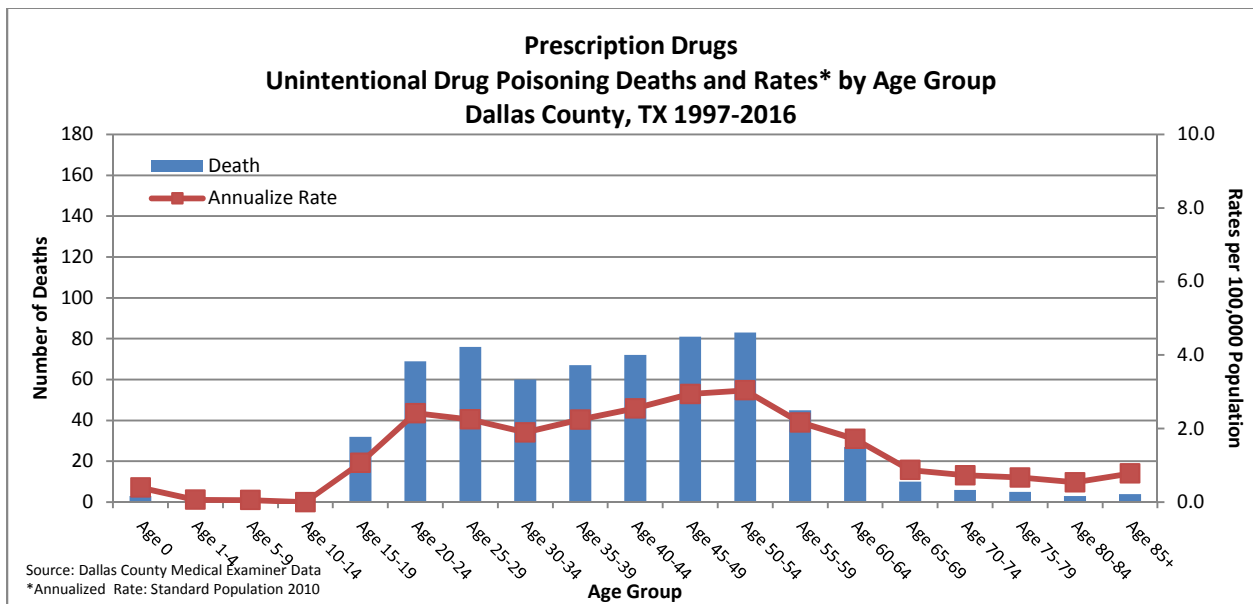
*Totals are more than 4445 because more than one drug group could be assigned to the death.

Deaths involving Prescription Drugs

Prescription drugs were defined as opioid prescription drugs, benzodiazepine-related drugs, and other prescription drugs. The number of deaths has increased 37-fold, but remains lower than illegal drug deaths. In 2015, prescription drug deaths made up 57% of drug deaths in the US, compared to 25% mentioned in the Dallas County ME's records.



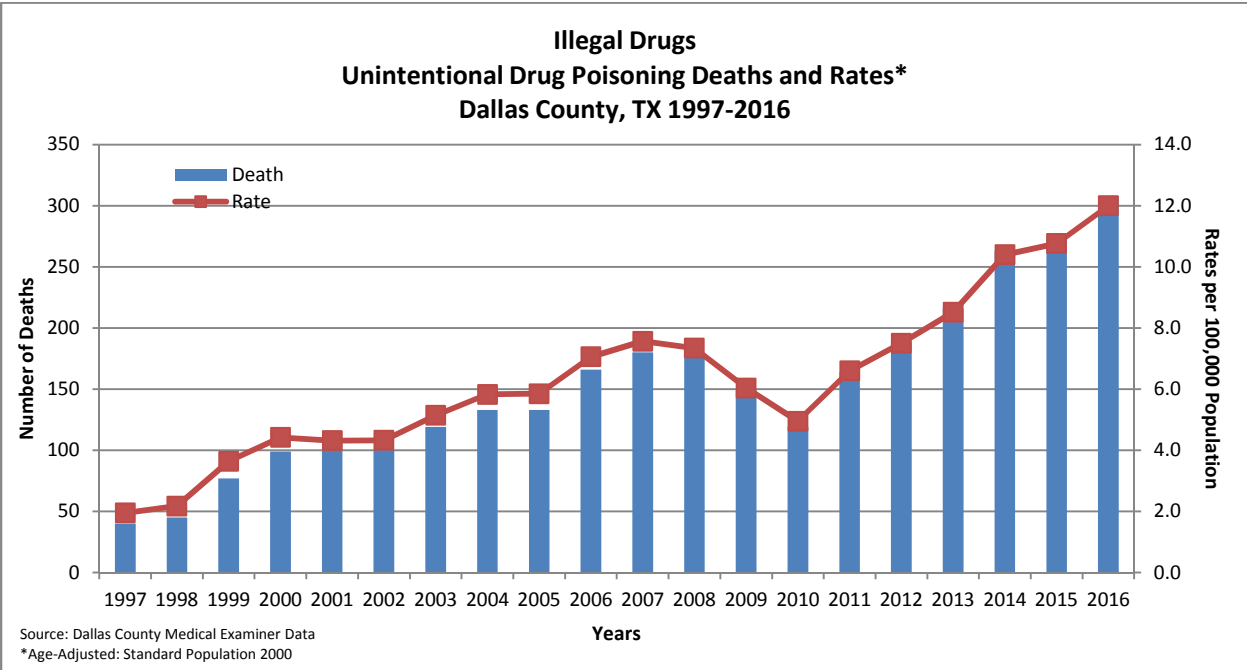
Deaths by Prescription Drugs by Age Group



The highest death rates were for age group 50-54.

Deaths involving Illegal Drugs

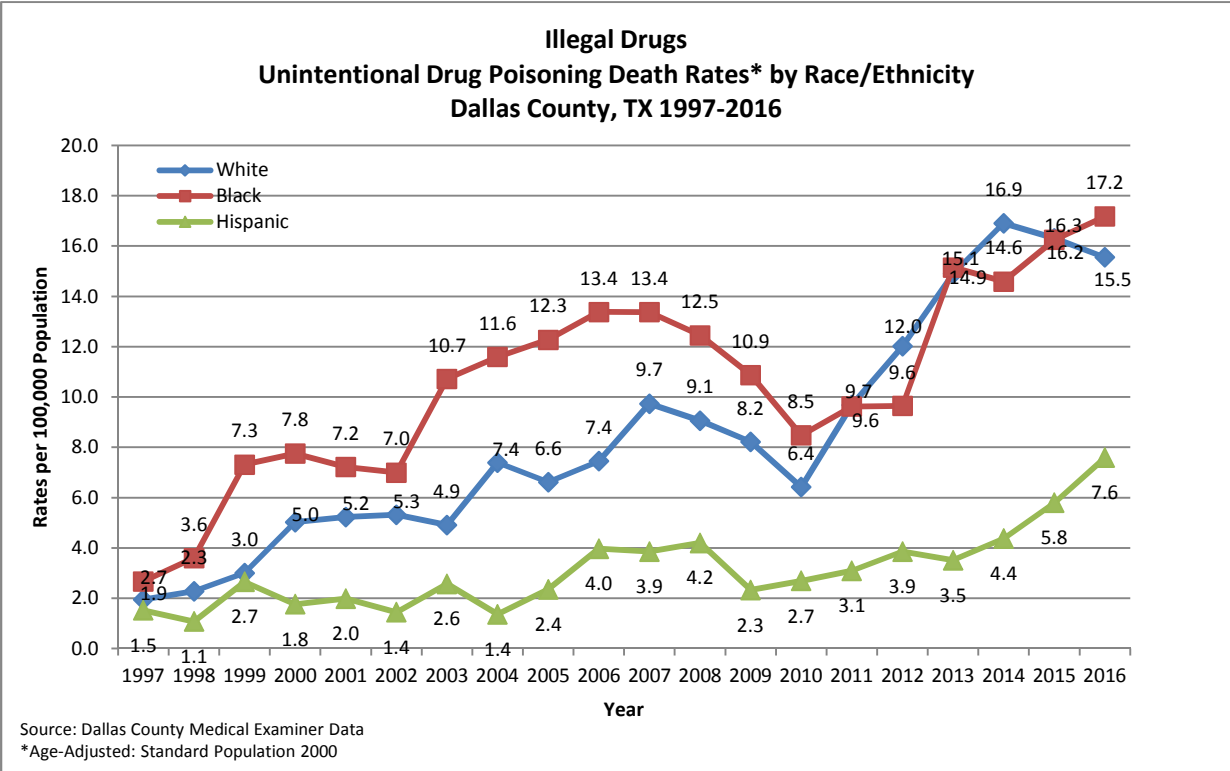
Illegal drugs were defined as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP) and MDMA (ecstasy). The number of deaths has increased more than 5-fold during this time period.



Seventy-six percent of the illegal drug related deaths were male. The death rate for males has increased almost 5-fold, and for females, the death rate has increased over 9-fold during the same time period.

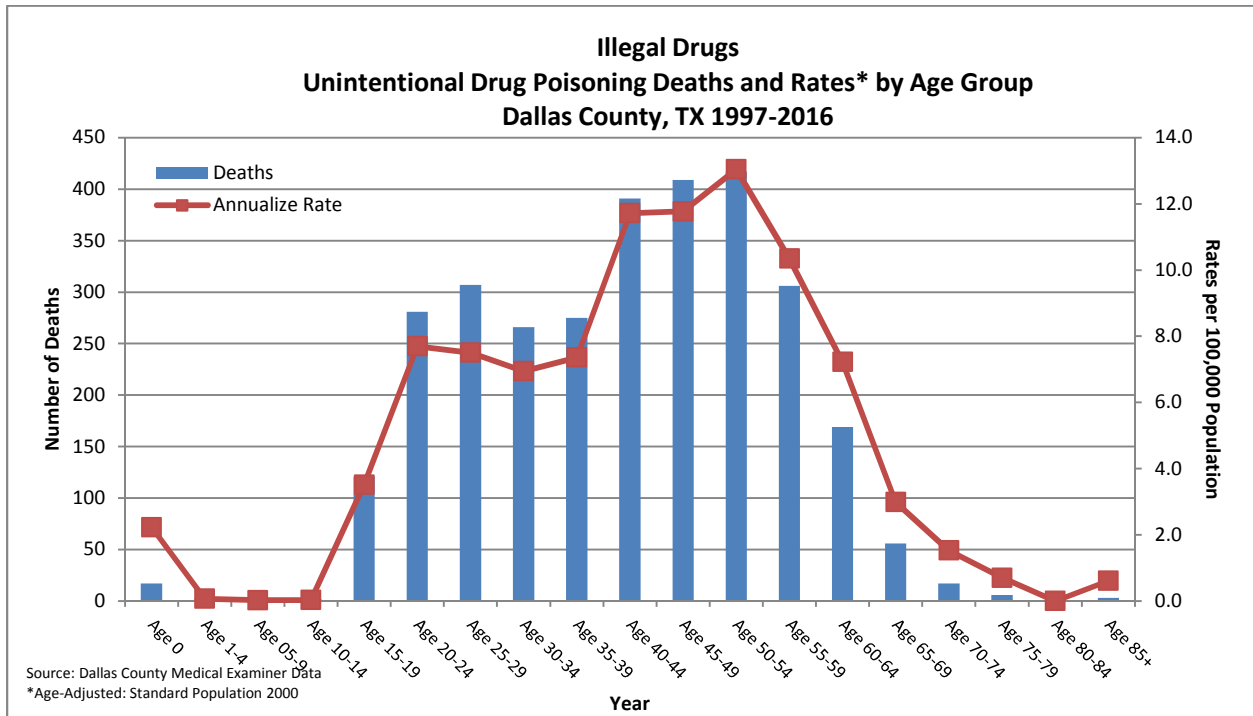
Deaths involving Illegal Drugs by Race/Ethnicity

Forty-five percent of the deaths were among whites, followed by blacks, and Hispanics. The white population had the highest death rate, which has increased by 8-fold between years 1997-2016. Among the black population, the death rate has increased 6-fold.

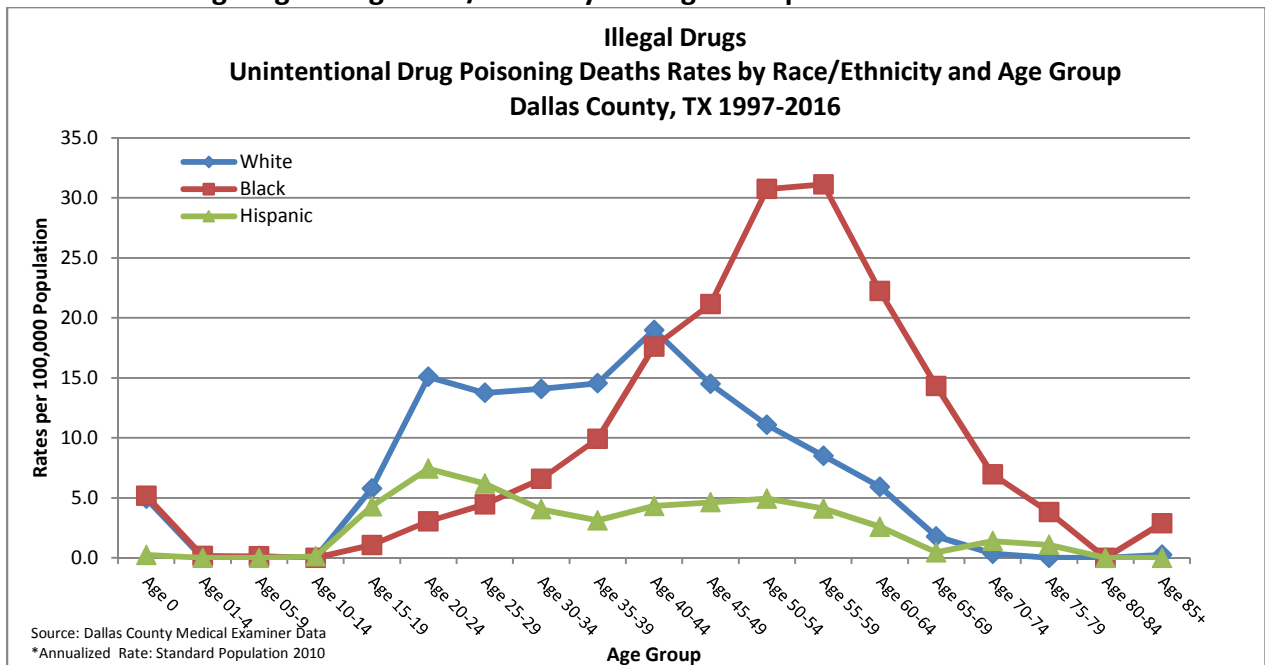


Deaths involving Illegal Drugs by Age Group

The average age of individuals who died from an illegal drug poisoning was 41 years old, and the age ranged from 0 years to 108 years. Poisoning deaths had two peaks that occurred between ages 20-29 and 40-54. The highest death rates per 100,000 population were for age group 50-54.



Deaths involving Illegal Drugs Race/Ethnicity and Age Group



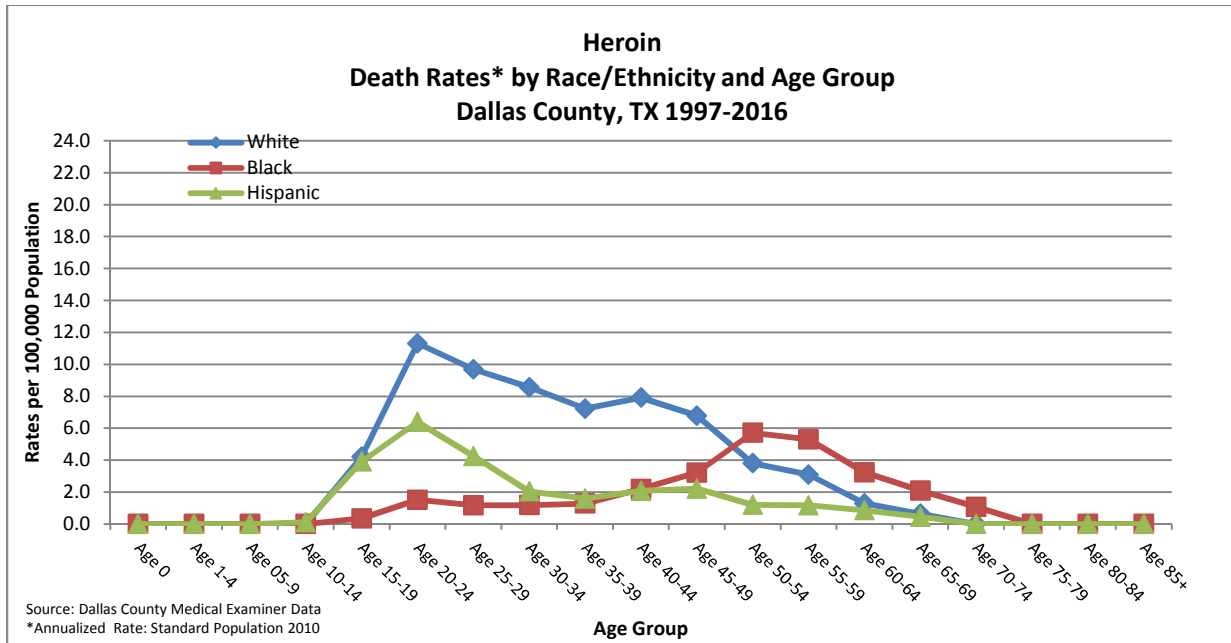
There is a different age profile of unintentional illegal drug death rates by race/ethnicity. For the white population, there are two peaks: the highest death rate was in ages 40 to 44, with another peak among

ages 20-24. Among blacks, the highest death rate was in ages 55-59. Among the Hispanic population, death rate peaks at ages 20-24.

Specific Drugs

When we analyzed the different illegal drugs deaths, we found that there were also different profiles by race/ethnicity and age group

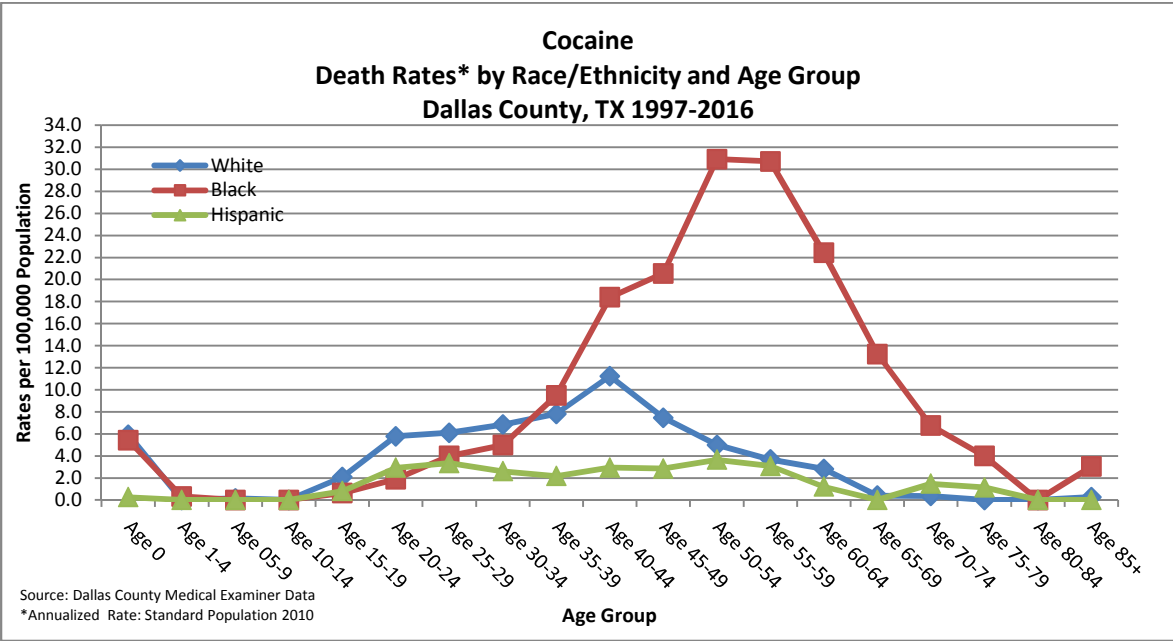
Heroin by Race/Ethnicity and Age Group



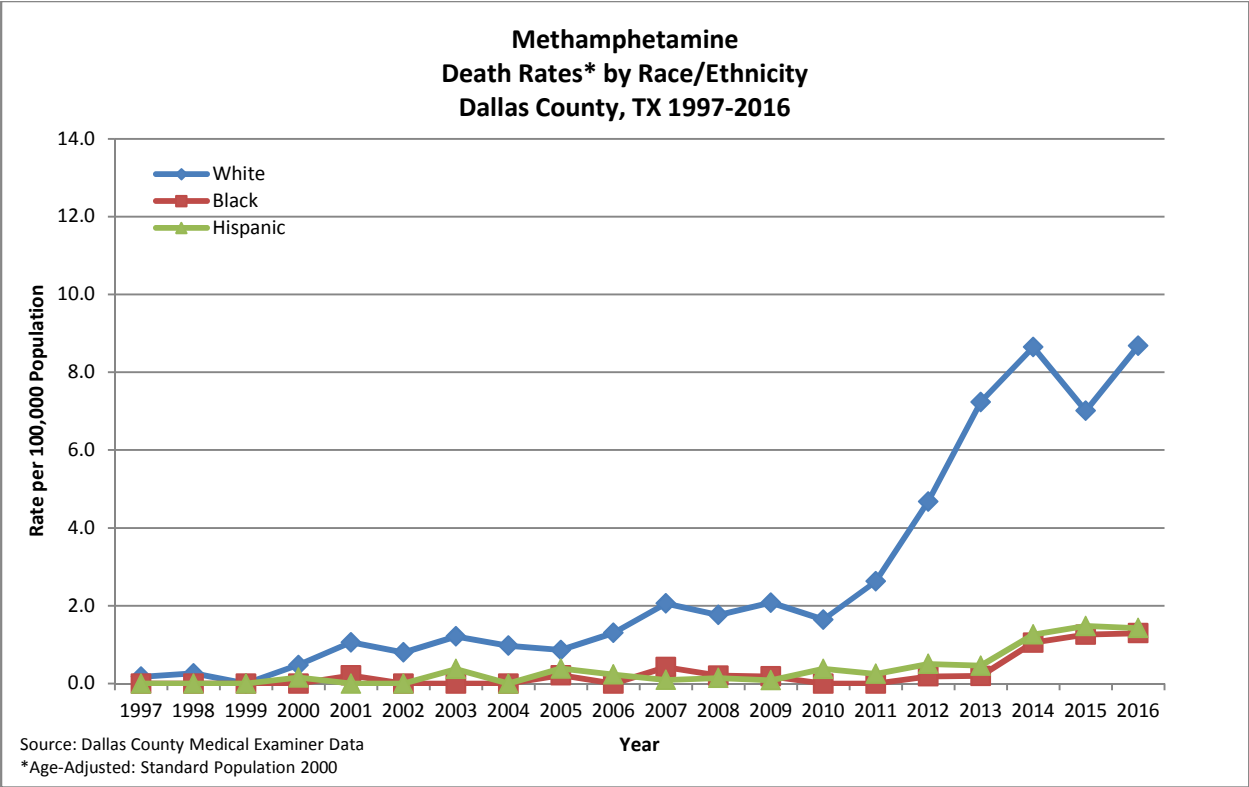
Among the white population, the highest death rate was between ages 20 to 24. Among blacks, the highest death rate was in ages 50-54, and in the Hispanic population, the death rate peaked at ages 20-24

Cocaine by Race/Ethnicity and Age Group

Cocaine-related death rates were highest among the black population, where cocaine deaths peaked in the 50-54 age group.

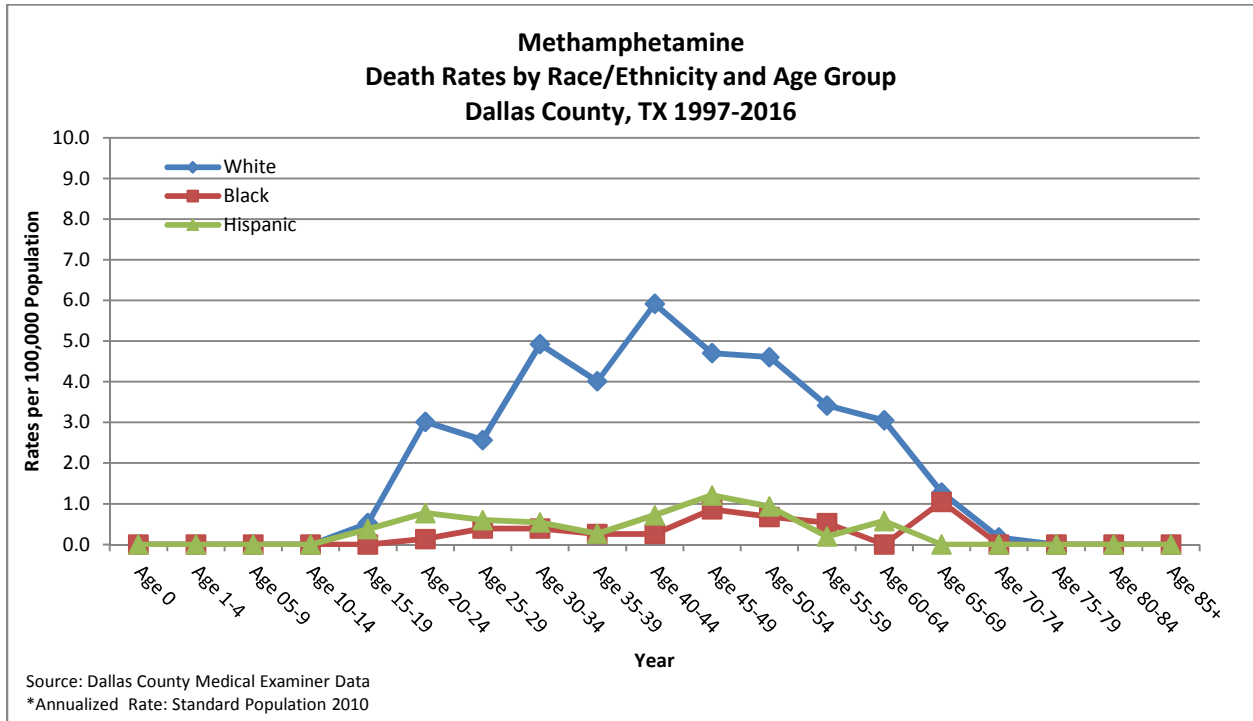


Methamphetamines by Race/Ethnicity



Whites had the highest methamphetamine death rate.

Methamphetamine by Race/Ethnicity and Age Group



Among whites, there are three peaks: the highest death rate was in ages 40 to 44, with other peaks among ages 20-24 and 30-34.