

## Missouri Deaths Due to Alcohol, Prescription Drugs, and Suicide



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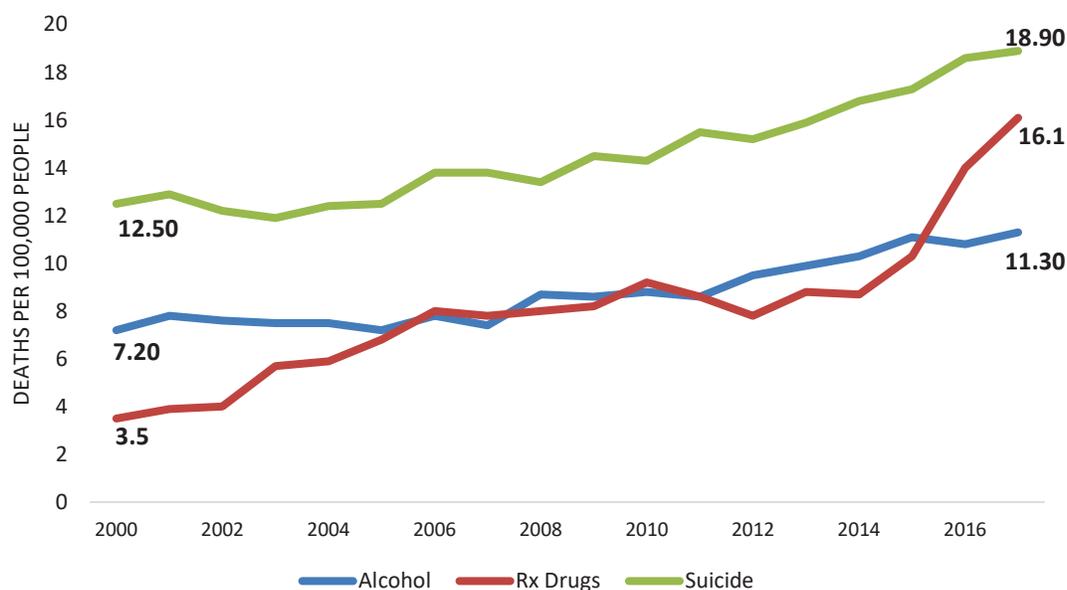
In Missouri, rates of death among Caucasians have increased significantly since 2000; especially among those who are middle aged, have less education, and women.<sup>1</sup> An estimated 68% of these excess deaths were due to accidental drug overdoses, suicide, alcoholic liver disease, and chronic lower respiratory disease. This rise in deaths due substance use and suicide is striking -- what some have termed “deaths of despair”.<sup>1</sup> In 2017 alone, 2,831 Missourians died from alcohol use, prescription drug use, and suicide.<sup>2</sup>

**Suicide** is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Missouri and 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for ages 10-34.<sup>3</sup> In the past decade, deaths by suicide increased by 41% in Missouri, compared to 22% nationwide.<sup>4</sup>

**Prescription drug deaths** in Missouri have increased by 360% since 2000.<sup>2</sup> The rate has increased drastically since 2012 due to high rates of opioid misuse and the rising presence of synthetic opioids, including fentanyl. Missouri ranks 14<sup>th</sup> in the country for opioid prescribing, at 71.8 prescriptions per 100 residents.<sup>5</sup> The nationwide rate is 58.7.<sup>5</sup>

Over half of Missourians report using **alcohol** in the past month and over one-quarter report binge drinking in the same period.<sup>6</sup> Deaths due to alcohol increased by 57% from 2000 to 2017, compared to 38% nationwide.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Missouri Foundation for Health, Why are Death Rates Rising among Whites in Missouri?, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> CDC WONDER Database, Underlying Cause of Death – Detailed Mortality, 1999–2017

<sup>3</sup> Missouri Institute of Mental Health, Suicide in Missouri: Where We Stand, August 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Trust for America’s Health and Well Being Trust, Pain in the Nation Update Issue Brief, March 2019.

<sup>5</sup> CDC US Opioid Prescribing Rate Maps, <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/maps/rxrate-maps.html>

<sup>6</sup> National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2016-2017.