



Awareness high about overdose deaths

In 2010, 857 Kentuckians died from unintentional drug poisonings, more than 16 per week, according to the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center.¹ This significant increase from 205 deaths in 2000 was driven largely by prescription drug overdoses.

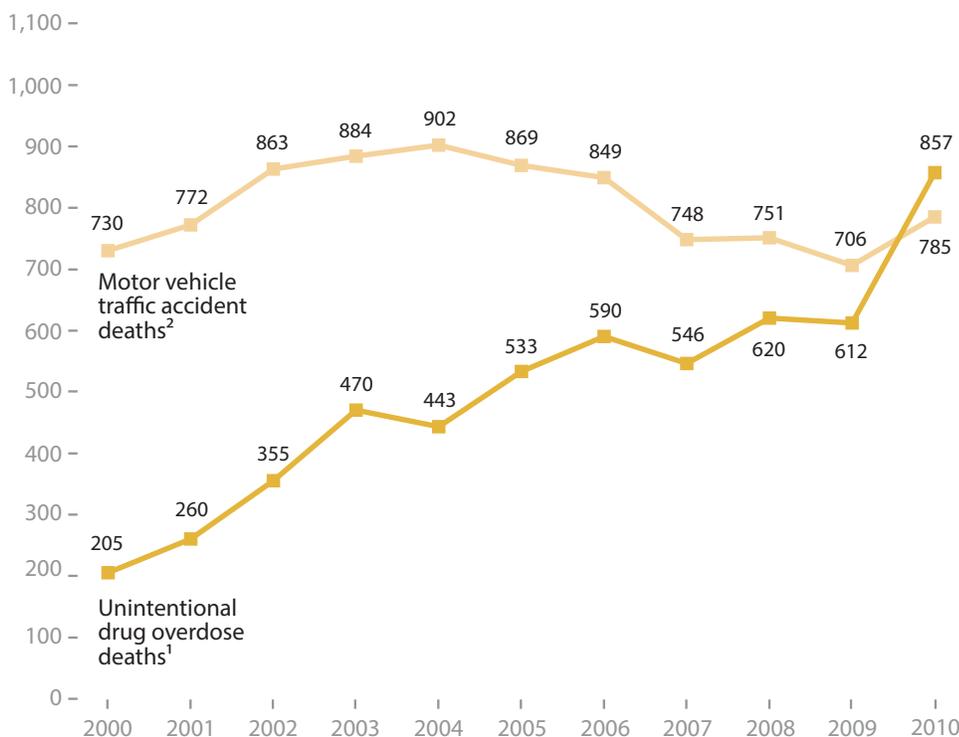
In 2010, for the first time, there were more deaths in Kentucky due to unintentional drug poisonings than motor vehicle collisions.² While the number of traffic deaths has remained about the same over the past 11 years, the number of unintentional drug deaths has risen sharply. There have been about 65 more drug deaths every year since 2000.

To gauge awareness of this trend, the 2012 *Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)* included a question about the leading causes of unintentional death in the state.

¹ Bunn, T., & Slavova, S. (2012). Drug overdose morbidity and mortality in Kentucky, 2000 – 2010: An examination of statewide data, including the rising impact of prescription drug overdose on fatality rates, and the parallel rise in associated medical costs. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center.

² Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), personal e-mail from Victoria Hubbard, Epidemiologist, Administrative & Quality Assurance Section, CHFS Vital Statistics. Data for 2009-2010 are preliminary.

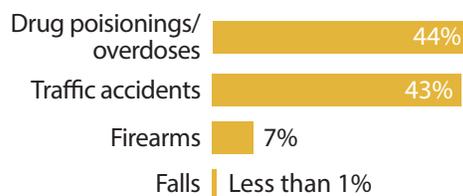
Number of deaths due to unintentional drug overdoses compared with deaths due to motor vehicle traffic accidents



Many Kentucky adults know leading cause of unintentional death

Kentucky adults were asked whether traffic accidents, falls, firearms or unintentional drug poisonings/overdoses resulted in the highest number of deaths in the state each

From what you've seen or heard, which of the following results in the highest number of deaths in Kentucky each year? (Total does not add to 100% because the response "don't know" is not included.)



Continued on back

These findings unless otherwise noted are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Sept. 20-Oct. 14, 2012, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,680 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 1,360 landline interviews and 320 cell phone interviews with cell phone users. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to ± 2.5%. There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias.

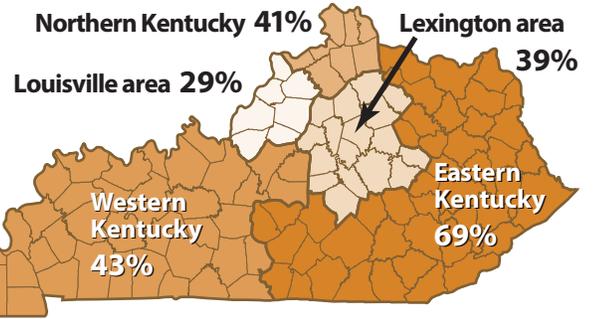
For more information about the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit www.healthy-ky.org or www.healthfoundation.org/kentucky-health-issues-poll.

year.³ More than 4 in 10 (44%) correctly said unintentional drug poisonings were the leading cause. However, more than half incorrectly said traffic accidents (43%), firearms (7%) or falls (less than 1%) were the leading cause. Five percent did not know the leading cause.

Eastern Kentuckians more aware that overdoses are leading cause of unintentional death

Substance abuse experts and the people KHIP has surveyed report significant prescription pain reliever abuse in Eastern Kentucky. Respondents from Eastern Kentucky were much more likely to correctly identify unintentional drug poisonings/overdoses (69%) as the leading cause of unintentional death than respondents from other regions.

Percentage of respondents who identified unintentional drug poisonings/overdoses as the leading cause of unintentional death in Kentucky



³ KHIP chose the term "traffic accidents" to align with the vital statistics category for motor vehicle traffic accidents. We understand that the injury prevention community prefers the term "traffic collision" to avoid the implication that a fatality was unavoidable.