

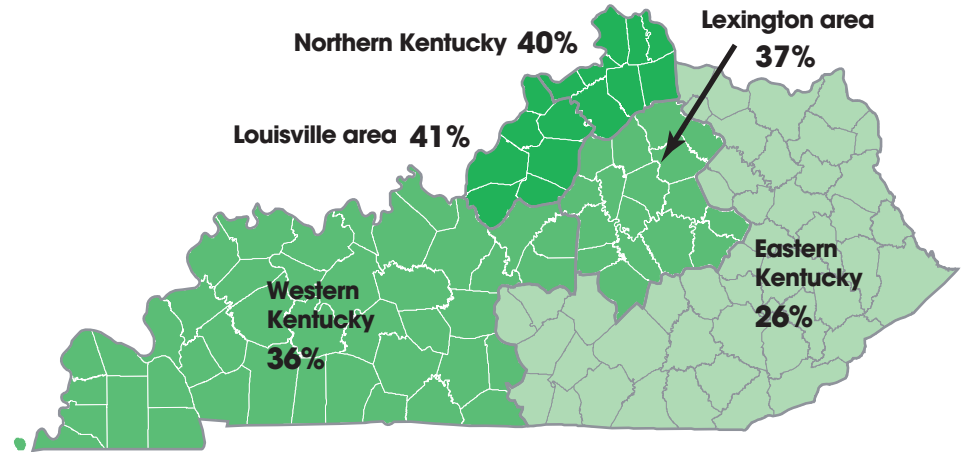


# Use and misuse of prescription pain relievers among Kentucky adults

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), opioids, including prescription drugs, are the most common cause of drug overdose deaths. Currently, Kentucky is ranked fifth for overdose deaths with a rate of 34 per 100,000 people. This rate has risen in recent years.<sup>1 2</sup>

The 2017 **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)** asked Kentucky adults about the use and misuse of prescription drugs. KHIP is sponsored by Interact for Health and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky.

### Percentage of Kentucky adults who have been prescribed a pain reliever in the past five years, by region



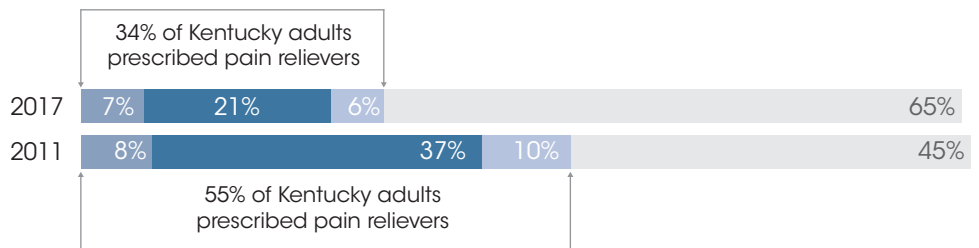
SOURCE: 2017 Kentucky Health Issues Poll (released April 2018)



## 1 IN 3 KENTUCKY ADULTS WERE PRESCRIBED PAIN RELIEVERS

KHIP asked, "During the past five years has a doctor, dentist or other medical professional prescribed a pain reliever for you that you could not purchase 'over the counter' such as OxyContin, Vicodin, Percocet or codeine?" One in 3 Kentucky adults (34%) reported that they had been prescribed a pain reliever at some point in the last five years. This is lower than

**During the past five years has a doctor, dentist or other medical professional prescribed a pain reliever for you that you could not purchase 'over the counter' such as OxyContin, Vicodin, Percocet or codeine? (Percentages may not add to 100 percent because of rounding and because the response "don't know" is not included.)**



- Prescribed fewer pills than needed to control pain
- Prescribed the right amount of pills to control pain
- Prescribed more pills than needed to control pain
- Not prescribed pain pills

**Continued on next page**

<sup>1</sup> The drug overdose death rate in Kentucky was 25 per 100,000 in 2014 and 30 per 100,000 in 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Drug Overdose Death Data*. (2017). Retrieved on Feb. 13, 2018, from [www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html](http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html).

SOURCE: 2017 Kentucky Health Issues Poll (released April 2018)



in 2011, when more than half of Kentucky adults (55%) reported that they had been prescribed such a pain reliever within the last five years.<sup>3</sup> Answers to this question varied by region in 2017. (See map on first page.)

## OPINIONS ABOUT AMOUNT OF PAIN PILLS PRESCRIBED

KHIP asked the 34% of Kentucky adults who reported being prescribed prescription pain relievers in the past five years, "Thinking about the most recent time a doctor, dentist or other medical professional prescribed a pain reliever for you, did you feel they prescribed more pills than you needed to control your pain, less pills than you needed to control your pain or the right amount of pills you needed to control your pain?" This question was also asked on KHIP in 2011.

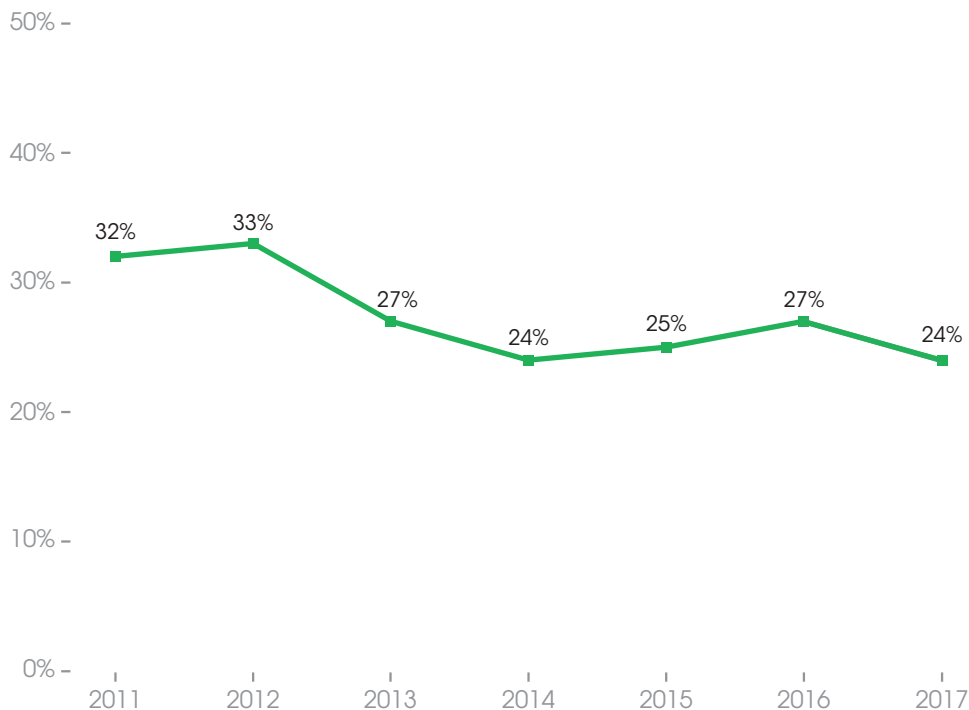
<sup>3</sup> For reports on Kentucky prescribing trends, see [www.chfs.ky.gov/os/oig/kasptrendreports](http://www.chfs.ky.gov/os/oig/kasptrendreports).

In 2017, among all Kentucky adults, 2 in 10 (21%) were prescribed pain drugs in the past five years and felt they received the right amount of pills. This compares with 7% of Kentucky adults who were prescribed pain drugs in the past five years and thought they received too few pills, and 6% who thought they received too many pills. (See graph on first page.)

## 1 IN 4 KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS ABUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

KHIP asked, "Have any of your family members or friends experienced problems as a result of abusing prescription pain relievers such as OxyContin, Vicodin, Percocet, or codeine?" Nearly 1 in 4 Kentucky adults (24%) reported that they had a friend or family member who has experienced problems as a result of prescription pain relievers. This has remained stable in recent years.

### Percentage of adults reporting that they had family members or friends who had experienced problems as a result of abusing prescription drugs



SOURCE: 2017 Kentucky Health Issues Poll (released April 2018)

