Syndromic Surveillance (SS) is used as an early detection method for potential clusters or outbreaks, by tracking drug overdose-related emergency department (ED) visits based on the patient's chief complaint upon admission and/or discharge diagnosis. There are currently 127 Georgia hospitals and urgent care facilities that share these SS data within the State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (SendSS).

**What is Syndromic Surveillance (SS)?**
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Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Patient Zip Code^, Georgia, February 2019

Top 5 Counties^ with 15 or More Drug* Overdose ED Visits During February 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Monthly Rate^ per 100,000 Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CARROLL</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWNDES</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARTOW</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBB</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHATHAM</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent Change^ of Drug* Overdose ED Visits, Georgia, September 2018-November 2018 to December 2018-February 2019

Statewide, 1,056 ED visits for Drug* overdoses occurred in February 2019, compared to 1,154 in February 2018.

Data source: Suspected drug overdose ED/Urgent Care visits by chief complaint upon admission and/or discharge diagnosis reported to DPH Syndromic Surveillance. See data limitations [here](https://dph.georgia.gov/drug-overdose-surveillance-unit).

*Drugs may include any over the counter, prescription, or illicit drug.
^Zip code and county are based on patient residence.
^Rate indicates visits per 100,000 persons using 2017 Census data as the denominator. Excluded rates for counties with <15 visits.
^Percent change data by county excludes counties with less than 3 visits.

Note: All data excludes patients ≤14 years of age. Counts represent the number of ED visits instead of the number of patients, therefore, patients with repeat visits may have been counted more than once.

Note: SS data is not the same as emergency department discharge data; drug overdose SS data is limited and based on accuracy of chief complaint and/or discharge diagnosis and what is reported to DPH SS. Data shown on this report may not depict the true burden of drug overdose in Georgia.
Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Sex, Race, and Age Group, Georgia, February 2018 and February 2019

17.8% 23.1%
16.4% 25.0%
15.3% 23.2%
11.0% 15.9%
7.7% 4.2%
4.2% 3.8%

Drug overdose cases in February 2019 were predominantly: Female (52.3%), White (67.1%), and between 25-34 years of age (24.2%) 19.0% increase in the count of Drug* overdoses among ages 15-24 compared to the same month last year

Percent of All Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Age Group

Percent of All Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Race

12.7% decrease in the count of Drug* overdoses among females compared to the same month last year 10.0% increase in the count of Drug* overdoses among blacks compared to the same month last year

Link(s) of interest:
Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Article: County-level Opioid Prescribing in the United States, 2015 and 2017
CDC Infographic: A Rise in Opioid Overdoses is Detected. What Now?

Data source: Suspected drug overdose ED/Urgent Care visits by chief complaint upon admission and/or discharge diagnosis reported to DPH Syndromic Surveillance. See data limitations here.

*Drugs may include any over the counter, prescription, or illicit drug.
1Rate indicates visits per 100,000 persons using 2017 Census data as the denominator. Excluded rates for counties with <15 visits.
2Cases with unknown sex, race, and age group were excluded from respective analyses.

Note: All data excludes patients ≤14 years of age. Counts represent the number of ED visits instead of the number of patients, therefore, patients with repeat visits may have been counted more than once.

Note: SS data is not the same as emergency department discharge data; drug overdose SS data is limited and based on accuracy of chief complaint and/or discharge diagnosis and what is reported to DPH SS. Data shown on this report may not depict the true burden of drug overdose in Georgia.