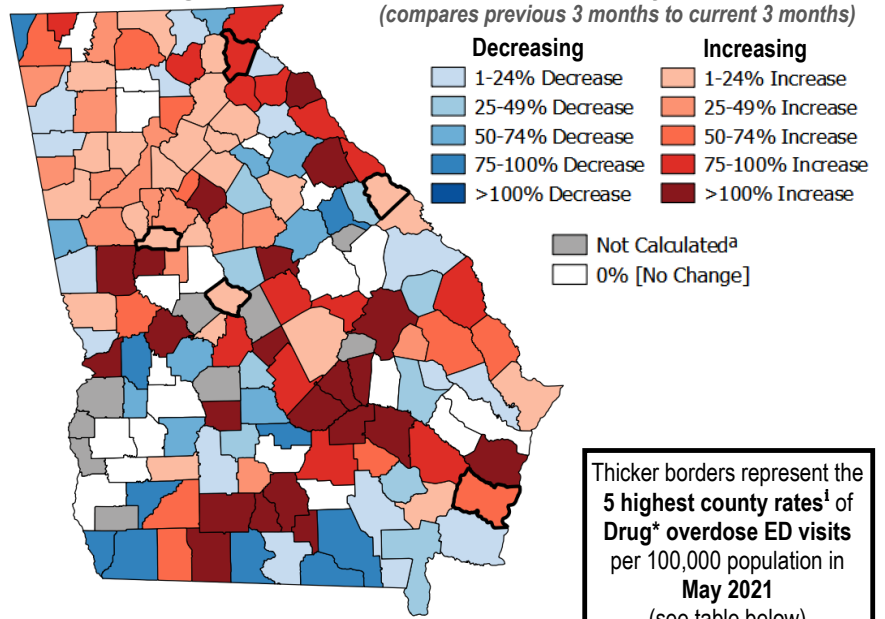# Syndromic Surveillance Drug Overdose Emergency Department Visits: Georgia, May 2021

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

Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Patient Zip Code^, Georgia, May 2021

Color Scale
Less Visits — More Visits
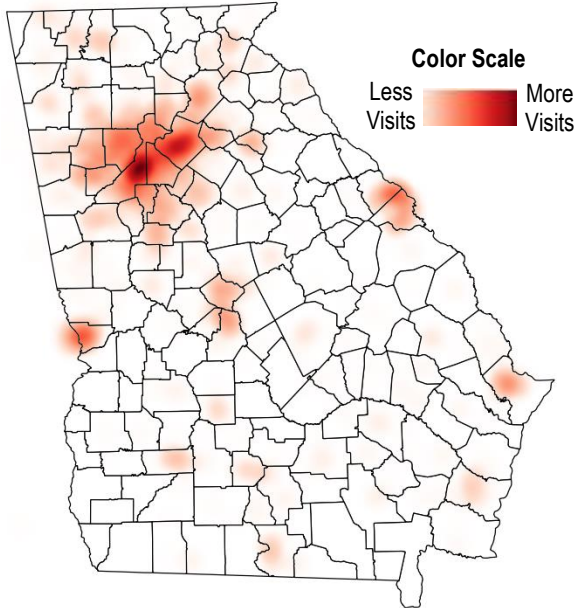
Percent Change[a] of Drug* Overdose ED Visits, Georgia, Dec 2020 - Feb 2021 to Mar 2021 - May 2021
(compares previous 3 months to current 3 months)

Decreasing
- 1-24% Decrease
- 25-49% Decrease
- 50-74% Decrease
- 75-100% Decrease
- >100% Decrease

Increasing
- 1-24% Increase
- 25-49% Increase
- 50-74% Increase
- 75-100% Increase
- >100% Increase

Not Calculated[a]
0% [No Change]

Thicker borders represent the **5 highest county rates[i]** of **Drug* overdose ED visits** per 100,000 population in **May 2021** (see table below)

Top 5 Counties^ with 15 or More Drug* Overdose ED Visits During May 2021

County	Monthly Rate[i] per 100,000 Population May 2021	Monthly Rate[i] per 100,000 Population Jun 2020 - May 2021
HABERSHAM	54.1	
SPALDING	35.4	
GLYNN	29.9	
COLUMBIA	29.8	
BIBB	29.5	

Statewide, *1,563* ED visits for *Drug** overdoses occurred in *May 2021*, compared to *1,257* in *May 2020*

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.
^Zip code and county are based on patient residence.
[i]Rate indicates visits per 100,000 persons using 2019 Census data as the denominator. Excluded rates for counties with <15 visits.
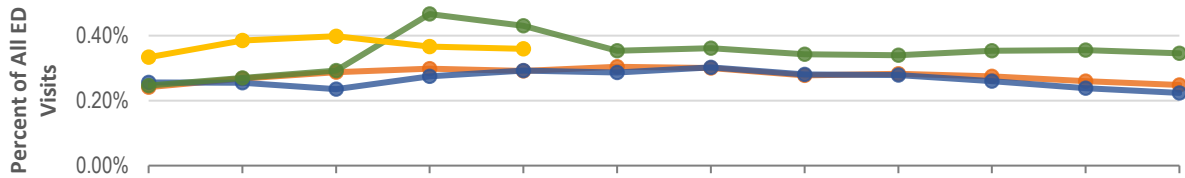[a]Percent change data by county excludes counties with less than 3 visits.
‡Drug Specific Categories are not mutually exclusive and include illicit and prescription drugs. Specific drugs identified using the chief complaint and/or discharge diagnosis fields and are not meant to be comprehensive.
Note: 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 is subject to change due to the current number of participating facilities and/or improvements to data quality. Data shown on this report may not depict the true burden of drug overdose in Georgia.

Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Month, Georgia, 2018-2021

Legend: 2018 — 2019 — 2020 — 2021

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average
2018 % of Total ED Visits	0.24%	0.27%	0.29%	0.30%	0.29%	0.30%	0.30%	0.28%	0.28%	0.27%	0.26%	0.25%	**3.33%**
2019 % of Total ED Visits	0.26%	0.25%	0.24%	0.27%	0.29%	0.29%	0.30%	0.28%	0.28%	0.26%	0.24%	0.22%	**3.18%**
2018 to 2019 % Change	8.33%	-7.41%	-17.24%	-10.00%	0.00%	-3.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-3.70%	-7.69%	-12.00%	**-4.42%**
2020 % of Total ED Visits	0.25%	0.27%	0.29%	0.47%	0.43%	0.35%	0.36%	0.34%	0.34%	0.35%	0.36%	0.35%	4.16%
2019 to 2020 % Change	-3.85%	8.00%	20.83%	74.07%	48.28%	20.69%	20.00%	21.43%	21.43%	34.62%	50.00%	59.09%	**31.22%**
2021 % of Total ED Visits	0.33%	0.38%	0.40%	0.37%	0.36%								1.84%
2020 to 2021 % Change	32.00%	40.74%	37.93%	-21.28%	-16.28%								**22.35%**

Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Sex, Race, and Age Group, Georgia, May 2020 and May 2021

Rate[i] of Drug* Overdose ED Visits

	May 2020 Rate[i] (per 100,000 Population)	May 2021 Rate[i] (per 100,000 Population)
Overall	14.7	18.3
Sex°		
Male	15.6	20.0
Female	13.8	16.7
Race°		
White	16.5	20.6
Black	8.7	11.6
Other	14.6	20.0
Age Group° (years)		
15-24	16.1	20.1
25-34	22.9	29.5
35-44	20.0	23.7
45-54	11.9	15.0
55-64	11.9	12.4
65-74	5.2	9.9
75+	6.1	6.8

Drug overdose ED visits in May 2021 were predominantly: Male (52.6%), White. (71.5%), and between 25-34 years of age (28.2%).*

Percent of All Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Age Group°

Legend: May 2020 — May 2021

Age (years)	May 2020	May 2021
15-24	18.6%	18.6%
25-34	27.2%	28.2%
35-44	22.0%	20.9%
45-54	13.2%	13.4%
55-64	12.3%	10.4%
65-74	3.8%	5.9%
75+	2.9%	2.6%

28.9% increase in the count of Drug overdoses among ages 25-34 compared to the same month last year*

Percent of All Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Sex°

Legend: May 2020 — May 2021

Sex	May 2020	May 2021
Male	51.2%	52.6%
Female	48.8%	47.4%
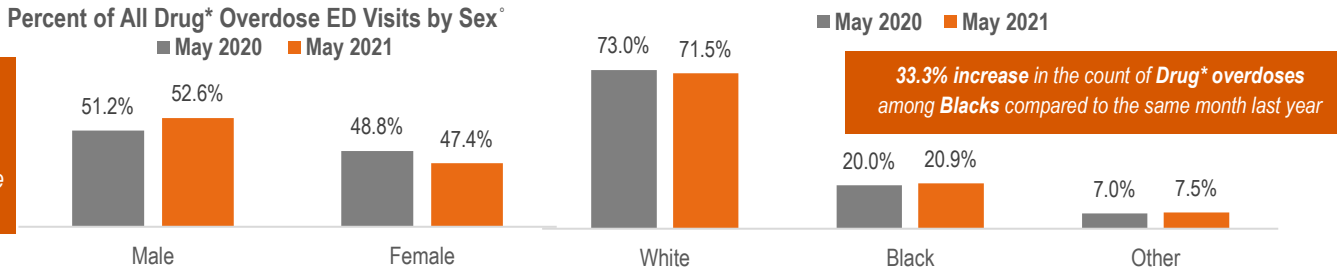
28% increase in the count of Drug overdoses among Males compared to the same month last year*

Percent of All Drug* Overdose ED Visits by Race°

Legend: May 2020 — May 2021

Race	May 2020	May 2021
White	73.0%	71.5%
Black	20.0%	20.9%
Other	7.0%	7.5%

33.3% increase in the count of Drug overdoses among Blacks compared to the same month last year*

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.

^Zip code and county are based on patient residence.

[i]Rate indicates visits per 100,000 persons using 2019 Census data as the denominator. Excluded rates for counties with <15 visits.

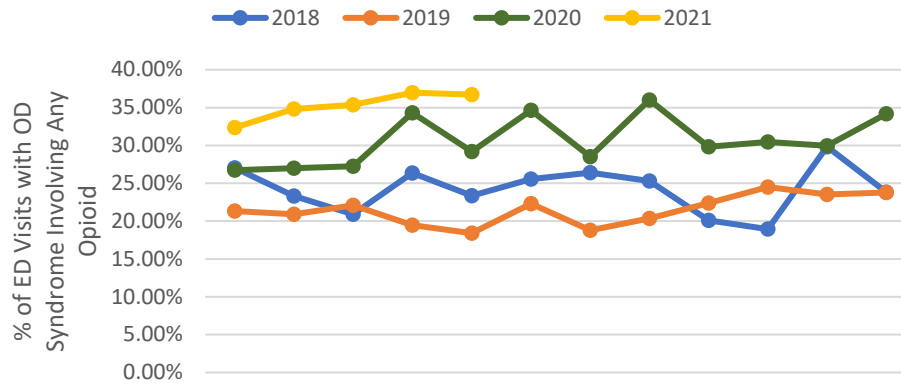ªPercent change data by county excludes counties with less than 3 visits.

‡Drug Specific Categories are not mutually exclusive and include illicit and prescription drugs. Specific drugs identified using the chief complaint and/or discharge diagnosis fields and are not meant to be comprehensive.

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.

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Opioid-Involved‡ OD ED Visits by Month, Georgia, 2018-2021

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average
2018	27.04%	23.31%	20.91%	26.36%	23.36%	25.56%	26.40%	25.30%	20.10%	18.94%	29.83%	23.83%	**24.24%**
2019	21.32%	20.91%	22.09%	19.47%	18.40%	22.30%	18.77%	20.33%	22.39%	24.50%	23.53%	23.79%	**21.48%**
% Change from 2018 to 2019	-21%	-10%	6%	-26%	-21%	-13%	-29%	-20%	11%	29%	-21%	0%	**-10%**
2020	26.72%	26.98%	27.22%	34.29%	29.20%	34.63%	28.53%	36.00%	29.84%	30.44%	29.95%	34.16%	**30.66%**
% Change from 2019 to 2020	25%	29%	23%	76%	59%	55%	52%	77%	33%	24%	27%	44%	**44%**
2021	32.36%	34.79%	35.34%	36.97%	36.72%								**35.24%**
% Change from 2020 to 2021	21%	29%	30%	8%	26%								**23%**

Heroin-Involved‡ OD ED Visits by Month, Georgia, 2018-2021
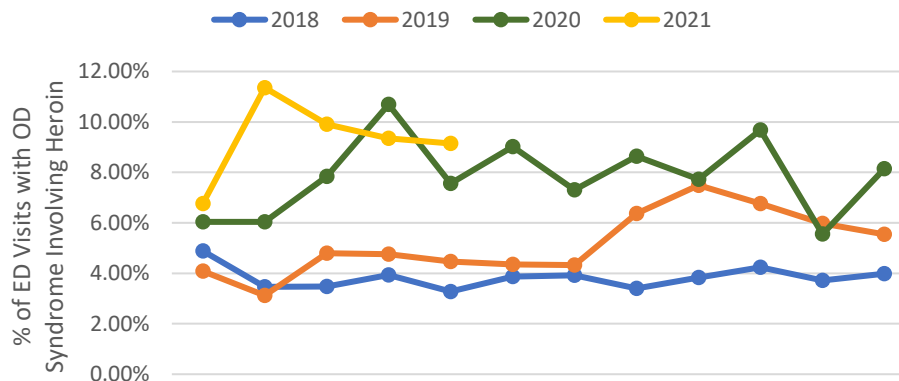
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average
2018	4.89%	3.47%	3.47%	3.93%	3.28%	3.87%	3.93%	3.40%	3.83%	4.24%	3.72%	3.99%	**3.83%**
2019	4.08%	3.12%	4.79%	4.76%	4.46%	4.36%	4.33%	6.36%	7.49%	6.76%	5.98%	5.55%	**5.17%**
% Change from 2018 to 2019	-16%	-10%	38%	21%	36%	12%	10%	87%	95%	60%	61%	39%	**36%**
2020	6.04%	6.04%	7.84%	10.69%	7.56%	9.01%	7.31%	8.64%	7.72%	9.68%	5.55%	8.15%	**7.85%**
% Change from 2019 to 2020	48%	94%	64%	125%	69%	107%	69%	36%	3%	43%	-7%	47%	**58%**
2021	6.76%	11.36%	9.90%	9.35%	9.15%								**9.30%**
% Change from 2020 to 2021	12%	88%	26%	-13%	21%								**27%**

Link(s) of interest:

Georgia Department of Public Health, Updated Suspect Drug Overdose Increases in Georgia Amid COVID-19 – April 2021

Georgia Department of Public Health, Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Monthly Report, May 2021

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.
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iRate indicates visits per 100,000 persons using 2019 Census data as the denominator. Excluded rates for counties with <15 visits.
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