

POISONING

- *Georgians aged 35 to 54 years had the highest poisoning death rate among all age groups. Forty percent of these deaths were caused by narcotics and hallucinogens.*
- *An average of 1,329 Georgians were hospitalized each year due to poisonings during the 1999-2001 period.*



Poisoning is defined as exposure to toxic or poisonous substances that cause a negative reaction of the body. Those substances include sedatives, psychotropic medications, narcotics, hallucinogens, anesthetics, and other drugs; liquids such as alcohol or pesticides; gases and vapors such as carbon monoxide or utility gas; and other noxious substances or chemicals.

Deaths from Poisoning

From 1999 through 2001, 995 Georgians died from accidental poisoning, an average of 332 per year. Of those dying, the majority (83%) were aged 25 to 64 years, 65% were males and 75% were white (Table 10).

Table 10. Number of Deaths by Age, Race and Sex: Poisoning, Georgia, 1999-2001

Age Group	White		Black		Other		Total	Average per year
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Under 5	5	0	5	0	1	0	11	4
5-14	1	0	3	1	0	0	5	2
15-24	68	14	9	2	1	0	94	31
25-44	267	133	66	41	4	0	511	170
45-64	127	92	69	24	0	1	313	104
65+	19	21	11	9	0	1	61	20
Total	487	260	163	77	6	2	995	332

Profile of Injuries in Georgia

The death rate from poisoning in Georgia was comparable to the US rate from 1979 to 1991. From 1992 to 2000, the Georgia death rate was lower than the US rate, with both Georgia and US rates increasing (Figure 23). Poisoning in Georgia was the only major injury mechanism with an average death rate lower than the national rate during 1999-2001.

Figure 23. Age-Adjusted Death Rates: Poisoning, Georgia and US, 1979-2001

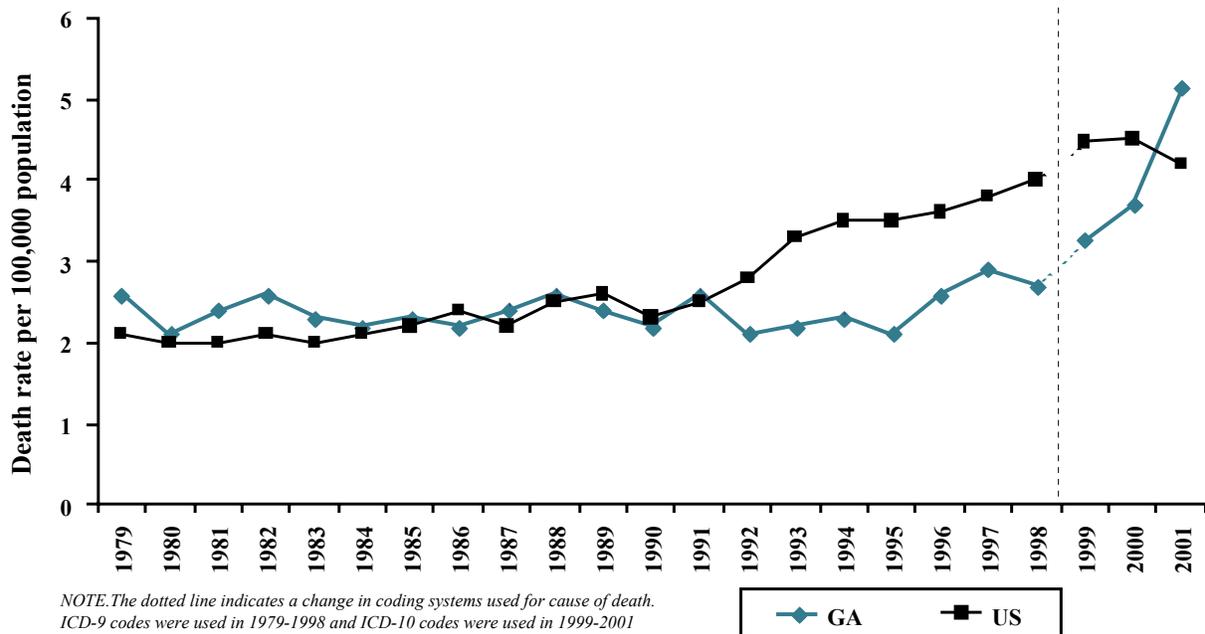
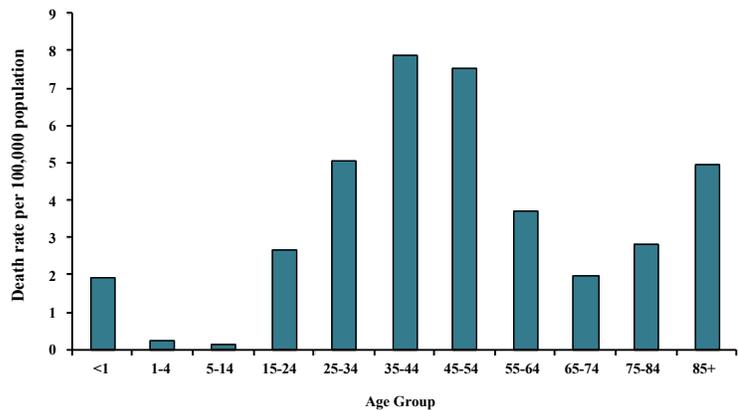


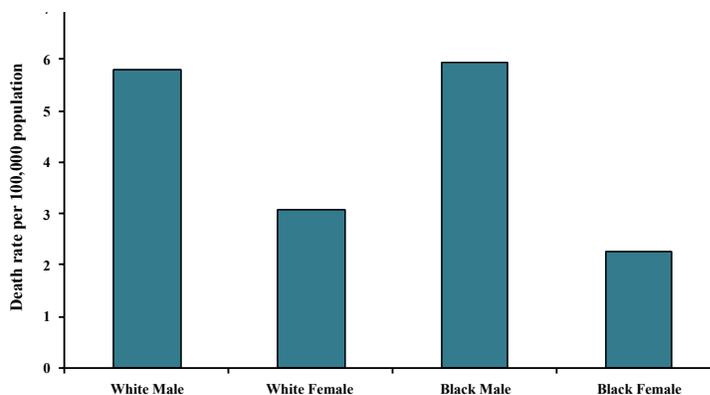
Figure 24. Age-Specific Death Rates: Poisoning, Georgia 1999-2001

Death rates from poisoning were highest for persons 35 to 54 years old (Figure 24). The lowest death rate was among children between the ages of 1 and 14 years.



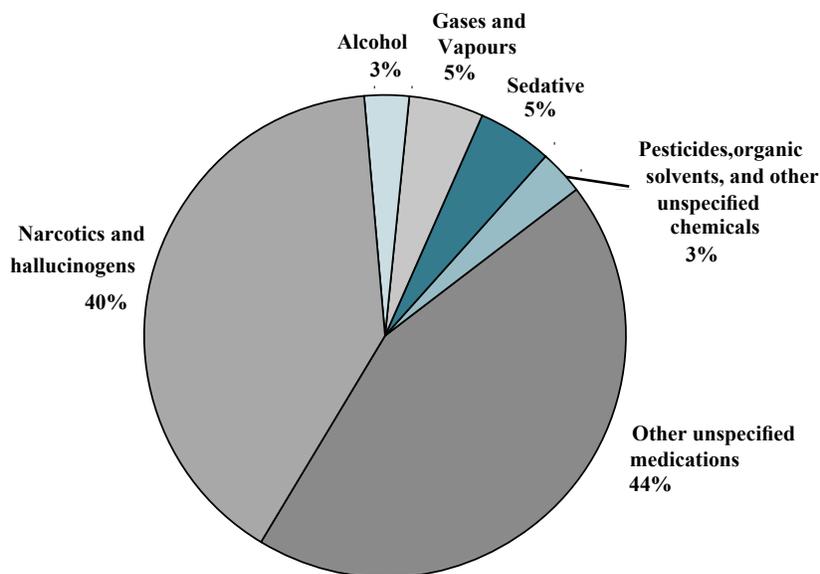
The death rate from poisoning was twice as high for males (5.4 per 100,000 population) as for females (2.7 per 100,000 population). Whites had a higher death rate (4.5 per 100,000 population) than blacks (3.9 per 100,000 population). Black males and white males had the highest poisoning death rates among all race/sex groups (Figure 25).

Figure 25. Age-Adjusted Death Rates by Race and Sex: Poisoning, Georgia, 1999-2001



Narcotics and hallucinogens caused 40% of all accidental poisoning deaths in 1999-2001. Cocaine is included in this subgroup (Figure 26).

Figure 26. Poisoning by Type, Georgia, 1999-2001



There were too few poisoning deaths per county to allow for calculation of reliable rates.

Hospitalizations from Poisoning

During the period 1999 through 2001, 3,984 Georgians were hospitalized for poisoning, an average of 1,329 per year, resulting in an average of 4,431 hospitalization days and nearly \$11 million in hospital charges per year. Of those hospitalized, about 59% were 25 to 64 years old, 49% were females, and 62% were whites (Table 11).

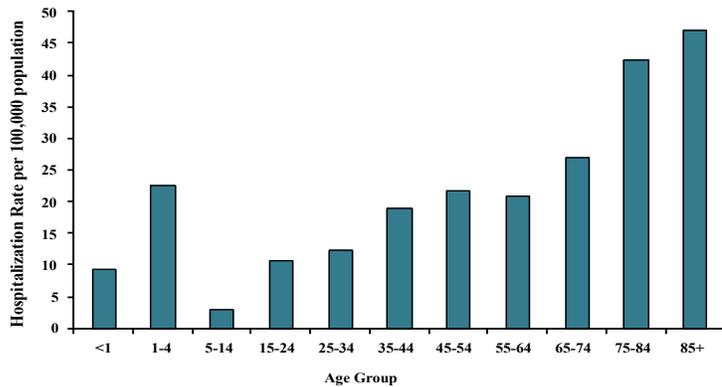
Table 11. Number of Hospitalizations by Age, Race and Sex: Poisoning, Georgia, 1999-2001

Age Group	White		Black		Hispanic		Total*	Average per Year
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Under 5	83	82	75	67	7	7	352	117
5-14	30	20	18	25	3	3	108	36
15-24	145	114	40	47	6	10	375	125
25-44	385	357	284	169	25	6	1,247	416
45-64	298	367	261	150	1	3	1,099	366
65+	170	403	91	119	0	5	803	268
Total	1,111	1,343	769	577	42	34	3,984	1,328

*Total includes all other races/ethnicity.

Children 5 to 14 years had the lowest poisoning hospitalization rate of all age groups. Persons 65 years and older and children between the ages of 1 and 4 years had the highest hospitalization rates (Figure 27).

Figure 27. Age-Specific Hospitalization Rates: Poisoning, Georgia, 1999-2001



The rate of hospitalization from poisoning was similar for males (17.8 per 100,000 population) and females (16.7 per 100,000 population). Non-Hispanic blacks (22.9 per 100,000 population) were more likely to be hospitalized than non-Hispanic whites (15.9 per 100,000 population) and Hispanics (9.5 per 100,000 population). Among all race/ethnic/sex groups, non-Hispanic black males had the highest hospitalization rate from poisoning (Figure 28)

Figure 28. Age-adjusted Hospitalization Rates by Race and Sex: Poisoning, Georgia, 1999-2001

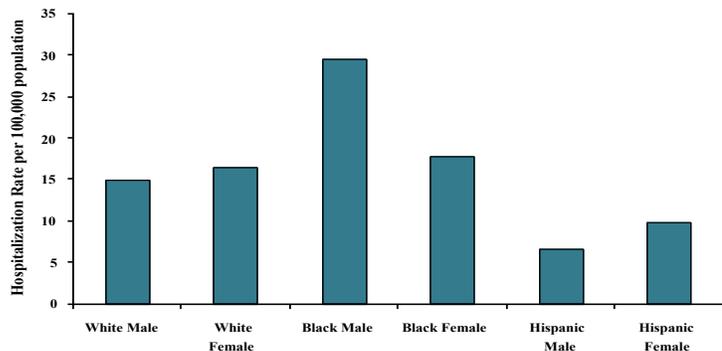
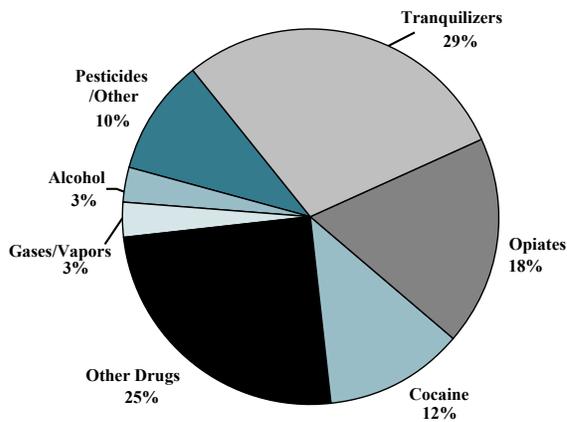


Figure 29. Poisonings by Type, Georgia, 1999-2001



Sedatives and tranquilizers accounted for 29% of poisoning hospitalizations, opiates accounted for 18%, and cocaine accounted for 12% of poisoning hospitalizations (Figure 29).

Poisoning Prevention Strategies

Death data indicate that narcotics and hallucinogens caused 40% of all accidental poisoning deaths. Continued efforts to reduce the prevalence of drug abuse and addiction are needed to prevent accidental poisoning deaths and hospitalizations. Disposing of old medicine properly, providing safe and secure storage for poisonous substances, and publicizing poison control centers can also prevent poisoning injuries.

Injury Prevention Programs for Poisonings

The Injury Prevention Section supports poisoning prevention efforts by providing data on poisonings to community coalitions.



Poisoning Prevention Resources

Georgia Poison Center
<http://www.georgiapoisoncenter.org/>
(1-800-222-1222)

American Association of Poison Control
Centers (AAPCC)
<http://www.aapcc.org/>

AAPCC Poison Help Line
<http://www.1-800-222-1222.info/>

Poison Prevention Week Council
<http://www.poisonprevention.org>

National Center for Environmental
Health (NCEH)

CDC Childhood Lead Prevention
Program
[http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/
lead.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/lead.htm)

NCEH information on Carbon
Monoxide
[http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/
airpollution/carbonmonoxide/
default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/airpollution/carbonmonoxide/default.htm)

National Lead Information Center
<http://www.epa.gov/lead/nlic.htm>
(800-424-LEAD (5323))