

Louisiana Opioid Statistics from NIH

- The main driver of opioid-related overdose deaths through 2012 was prescription opioids.
- In 2015, Louisiana providers wrote 103.2 opioid prescriptions per 100 persons (4.8 million prescriptions). In the same period, the national average was 70 prescriptions per 100 people.

Other Louisiana Opioid Statistics:

- In East Baton Rouge, opioid overdose deaths increased 218% from 2012 to 2016 (<https://www.businessreport.com/business/opioid-baton-rouge-epidemic>)
- Opioid use has even impacted the workforce in Baton Rouge – many workers in Baton Rouge are failing drug tests due to opioids (<https://www.businessreport.com/business/opioid-baton-rouge-epidemic>)
- The number of newborns in Louisiana exposed to alcohol and drugs before their births almost tripled over an eight year period ending in 2016. (http://www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2017/09/louisiana_newborns_drugs.html)
- The number of accidental drug-related deaths in New Orleans exceeded the number of murders in 2016. (http://www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2017/09/louisiana_newborns_drugs.html)
- In 2016, the number of opioid related deaths in LA was 21.3 per 100,000, exceeding the national average. (<http://opioid.amfar.org/LA>)
- Louisiana is one of eight states with more opioid prescriptions than residents (<https://www.businessreport.com/business/opioid-baton-rouge-epidemic>)
- The Workers' Compensation Research Institute reports that 85% of injured workers in Louisiana on pain medication received opioids from 2012 - 2014. 1 in 6 received opioids on a long-term basis, making Louisiana #1 among 25 study states for long-term use. (<https://www.businessreport.com/business/opioid-baton-rouge-epidemic>)

Some information on oral health and drugs from AddictionPro.com:

- "Meth Mouth" - Severe tooth decay and gum disease is a commonly known result of methamphetamine use. 96% of methamphetamine users were found to have cavities.
- A 2005 study appearing in the British Dental Journal found that 95% of all illicit drug users surveyed reported experiencing dry mouth while 75% experienced a "chewing" sensation, 56% felt pain or tenderness in their jaw muscle or joint, and 52% developed a habit of grinding their teeth.
- Oral health problems stemming from substance use puts patients at an increased risk for other ailments as well.
- "The oral cavity is it's own microbiome with its own set of bacteria. Imbalances in that microbiome heighten the potential for heart attack, cardiovascular disease and type II diabetes."
- When addiction treatment patients are in detox, they will likely experience increased oral pain, including pain in the jaw and headaches, if they have underlying dental health issues. Opioids mask a lot of underlying, serious dental issues.
- **Drugs and their effect on dental health:**
 - Opioids - heroin causes sugary food/drink cravings. Other complications include: grinding teeth, oral fungus, viral infections, loss of sensitivity (which could lead the user to ignore cavities or gum disease).
 - Alcohol - Increased plaque buildup, rapid tooth decay, tooth stains
 - Amphetamines - Grinding teeth, jaw damage, dry mouth

- Cocaine - Powdered form rubbed in to the gums create mouth sores and damages tooth enamel, while snorting damages upper palate tissues. Cocaine use can also lead to jaw and mouth related muscle spasms and grinding teeth.
- Marijuana - Oral cancer, dry mouth, vomiting, tooth enamel damage
- Meth - Dry mouth, gum disease, grinding teeth, increased cravings for sugary foods and drinks.
- Tobacco - Smoking and chewing tobacco increases risk of oral/throat cancer. Other risks: gum disease, halitosis.

Information from the American Dental Association:

- The ADA announced a new policy on opioids supporting mandates on prescription limits and continuing education.
- The ADA supports the limits on opioid dosage and duration of no more than seven days for the treatment of acute pain.
- Dentists can/will register with and utilize Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs to promote the appropriate use of opioids and deter misuse and abuse.
- In a study, it was found that for adults, a combination of 400mg of ibuprofen plus 1000 mg of acetaminophen was superior to any opioid-containing medications studied. Dentists now consider NSAIDS as the first-line therapy for acute pain management.

More information from the ADA:

- In March 2018, the President of the ADA, Dr. Joseph Crowley, announced a policy that says for dentists should eliminate opioids from their arsenal if at all possible.
- Dentists are the leading prescribers of opioids for U.S. teens and the largest increase in dental prescriptions from 2010 to 2015 occurred in 11-18 year olds.
- The new policy supports making continuing education courses focusing on limiting opioid use a requirement for licensing dentists.
- In Pennsylvania, a recently enacted law requires dentists to get written consent from parents before prescribing opioids to patients under 18.

Other dental facts:

- Opioid abuse in teens can start at the dentist. For the 12-17 year old population, 2015 stats revealed that more than a quarter of a million adolescents (276,000) were currently using pain relievers for nonmedical reasons. Of those, 122,000 were addicted. (<https://www.dentistryiq.com/articles/2017/04/4-ways-dentists-can-help-solve-the-national-opioid-epidemic.html>)