

# Prescription Drug Overdose in Michigan : A Growing Problem

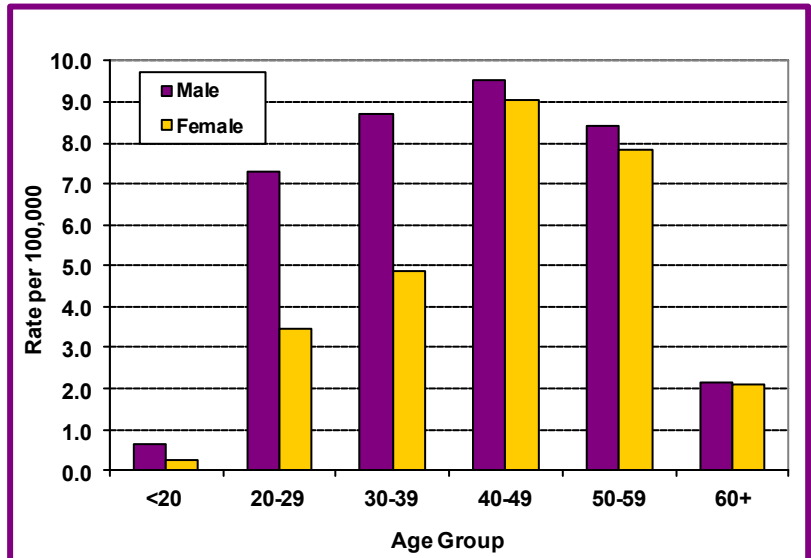
## Who is at highest risk of dying from a prescription drug overdose?

- Prescription drug overdose deaths are more common among males than females, and death rates are highest among middle-aged residents.

**From 2007-2010 rates were highest among males and females aged 40-49.**

- The largest gender difference was among those aged 20-39 where rates were two times higher among males than females.
- Residents aged 40-49 were almost 18 times as likely to die from prescription drug overdose as residents under the age of 20.

**Prescription Drug Overdose Death\* Rates, by Age and Sex, Michigan, 2007-2010**



\* Prescription drug overdose death: death due to misuse or abuse of a legal drug that can be prescribed by a health care provider.

## What can be done to reduce prescription drug overdose in Michigan?

- Dispel the perception that prescription medications are safer to abuse, and result in less shame if caught, than illegal drugs.
- Encourage the proper disposal of unused medications. For example, through community drug take-back programs.
- Promote involvement in local efforts to address this important health issue.

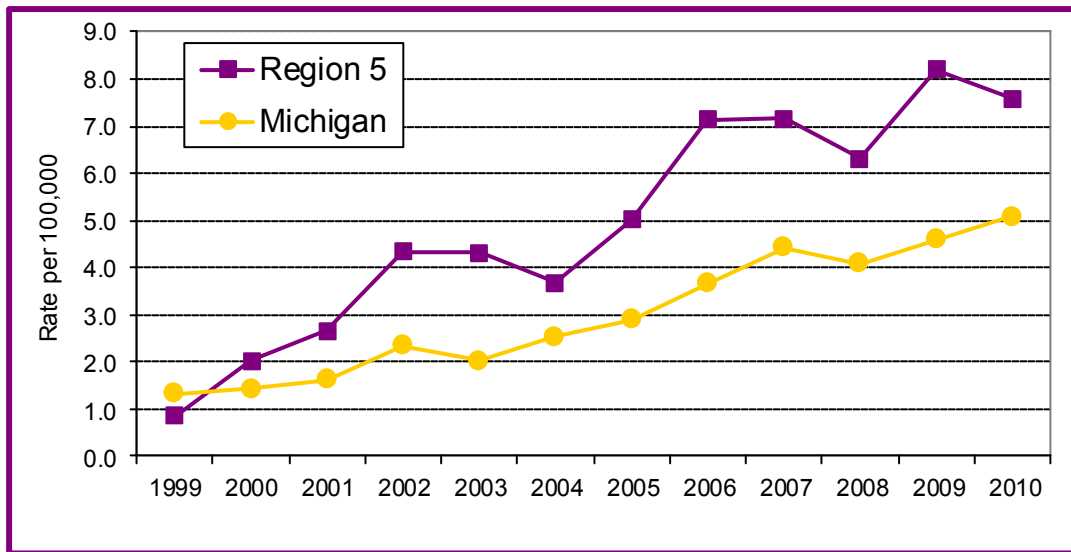
Information about Regional Substance Abuse Coordinating Agencies and other resources on this topic are available at [www.michigan.gov/mdch-bsaas](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch-bsaas).

For important information on prescription drug overdose deaths in Emergency Preparedness Region 5, please see next page.

## Emergency Preparedness Region 5

### Counties of Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Branch Prescription Drug Overdose Death Rate is Increasing Faster than the State Rate

#### Long-term Trends in Prescription Drug Overdose Death Rates, Region 5 and Michigan, 1999–2010



In Region 5, the prescription drug overdose death rate was eight and a half times higher in 2010 than it was in 1999.

#### Comments for recent years (2007-2010)

- The prescription drug overdose death rate for Region 5 was 69% higher than the state rate. This was statistically significant.\*
- About 70 Region 5 residents died each year from prescription drug overdose. Over half of these deaths were among those aged 35-54.
- Males comprised 58% of decedents.

\*P<.0001 meaning that the probability that the observed difference in prescription drug overdose death rates between the state and Region 5 could have arisen by chance alone, and that this difference does not reflect any true differences in rate between the state and the region, is less than 1 in 10,000.