Deaths from Stimulants Steadily Rising Amid Opioid Crisis

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While headlines in the US have mostly been dominated by the opioid epidemic, another major health concern is developing across the country. Deaths from stimulants are steadily rising, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Overdose deaths involving cocaine and psychostimulants such as methamphetamines, MDMA, methylphenidate, and caffeine have been increasing over the years. This paints a much more complicated picture of the current drug crisis, as people are also dying from opioids such as heroin and Fentanyl.

In 2017, there were 23,139 overdose deaths involving stimulants. This makes up nearly a third of the total number of fatal overdoses that year, which reached 70,237.

Between 2015 and 2016, cocaine-related overdose death rates rose by 52 percent. At the same time, psychostimulant-related overdose death rates rose by 33 percent. From 2016 to 2017, the number of fatal overdoses from both classes of drugs rose again by about a third. Overdose deaths from these stimulants jumped from 12,122 in 2015 to 17,258 in 2016. This is an increase of 42 percent within just one year.

The report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention evaluated data involving drug overdose deaths across age, sex, and race and across all US census regions from 2003 to 2017. The CDC also evaluated drug use patterns in 34 states and the District of Columbia. Because of this, the researchers found that the rise in death rates from the examined stimulants happened across all demographic groups as well and in some states.

The researchers noted that the rates of cocaine-related overdose fatalities remained stable from 2003 to 2006. It then steadily fell by about 11 percent annually until 2012. This decline can be attributed to the drop in supply and an increase in the cost of cocaine during that period, meaning the rate of cocaine-related overdose deaths dropped as well.

However, from 2012 to 2017, the number of deaths involving cocaine abuse has risen by 29 percent annually. Click the link to see Daytona Beach's top rehab placement programs.

Similarly, the rates of psychostimulant overdose deaths were stable from 2003 to 2010. But between 2010 and 2017, the rate of deaths involving these psychostimulant drugs has increased annually by 29 percent.

Researchers also found that opioids were frequently involved in these fatal overdoses. In 2017, 73 percent of all cocaine-related overdose deaths also involved the use of opioids. On that same year, half of the psychostimulant-related overdose deaths also involved opioid use.

The researchers wanted to understand why synthetic opioids played a role in the use of these stimulants, and what role drugs like Fentanyl played in drug abuse. They compared the death rates of overdoses from only stimulant use and overdoses that involved both stimulants and opioids.

Although Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids like it played a significant part in the increase of cocaine-related deaths from 2012 to 2017, opioids were not as influential in terms of the rise of psychostimulant-involved deaths from 2010 to 2017.

What?s more concerning is that death rates from overdoses involving cocaine and synthetic opioids increased by 114 percent annually between 2012 to 2017, despite remaining stable from 2003 to 2012.

Researchers will continue to watch for these trends and patterns as more solutions to the opioid crisis are being implemented. It is important to prevent these upcoming problems, such as the marked increase in stimulant overdose deaths, so that it wouldn?t develop into another major health crisis.

If someone in the family is struggling with opioid or alcohol addiction, it is important to seek help. A

combination of medical detox and behavioral therapy can go a long way in the fight against drug abuse. But because every individual is affected by addiction differently, a comprehensive program tailored to their specific needs is necessary. Look for a nearby addiction treatment facility today and find out how drug treatment programs work.

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