

Methamphetamine Misuse/Abuse and Consequences

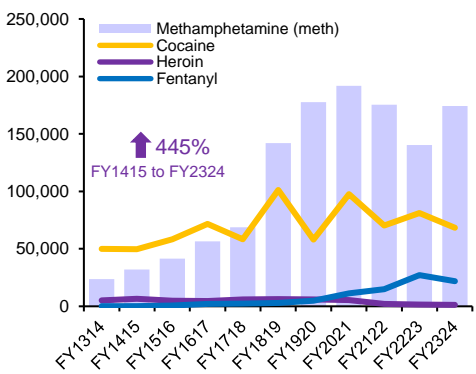
February 2025

Availability

Prevalence

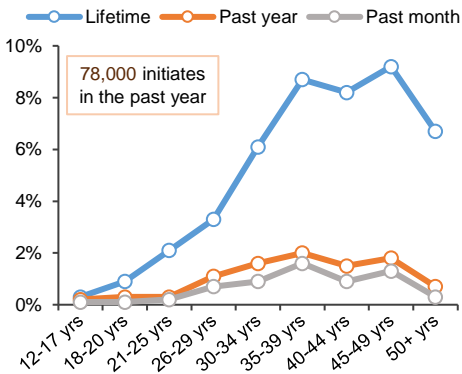
Health Conditions

Nationwide drug seizures (in pounds), U.S., FY1415-FY2324¹



Domestic meth seizures increased in the US following FY1819, and remains high

Lifetime, past year, and past month meth use by age, U.S., 2023²



Meth use was highest among people aged 35-39 and 45-49 years

Increased risk of adverse outcomes associated with meth use (vs. non-use)

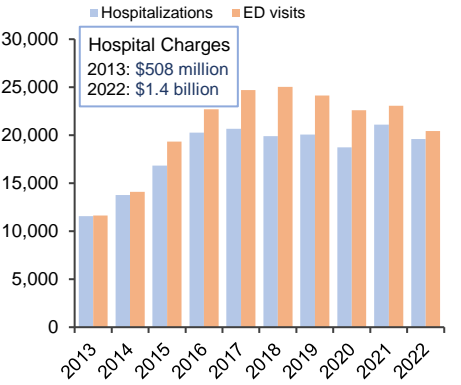
Depression ³	1.3 times
HIV infection ⁴	1.5 times
Heart attack ⁵	1.6 times
Suicide attempt ³	1.7 times
Heart failure ⁶	1.8 times
Stroke ⁷	1.9 times
Parkinson's disease ⁸	2.8 times
Preterm birth ⁹	3.1 times
Hepatitis C virus infection ¹⁰	3.4 times
Low birth weight ¹¹	3.5 times
Psychosis ³	5.3 times
Placental abruption ⁹	5.6 times
Dental problems ¹²	6.6 times
Schizophrenia ¹³	9.4 times

Meth use is associated with many adverse health outcomes

Healthcare Utilization

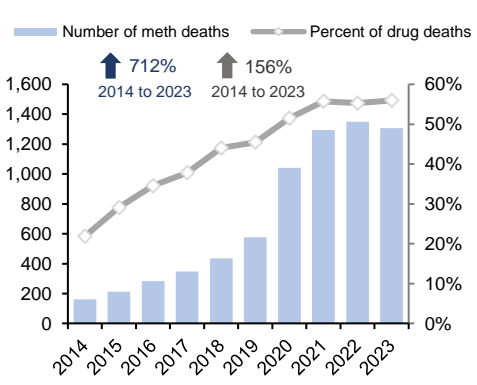
Deaths

Meth-related^a hospitalizations and ED visits, Los Angeles County (LAC), 2013-2022¹⁴



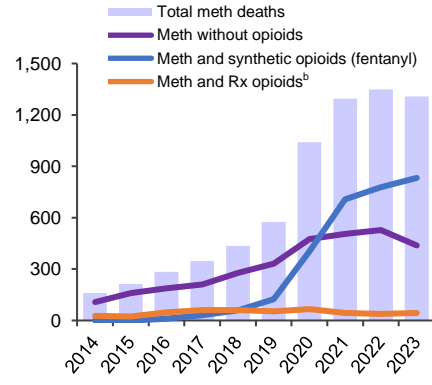
Meth-related ED visits decreased slightly from 2018, while hospitalizations have remained stable in LAC

Meth overdose-related deaths, LAC, 2014-2023¹⁵



Meth-related deaths and its percent of all drug deaths in LAC increased over the past decade

Meth overdose-related deaths by opioid involvement, LAC, 2014-2023¹⁵

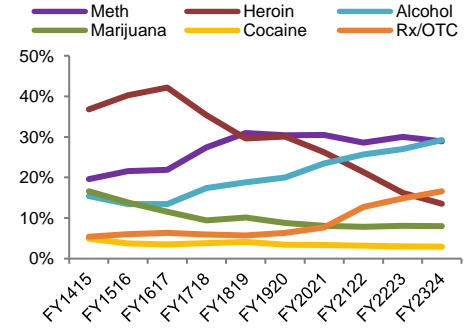


64% of meth-related deaths in 2023 involved synthetic opioids (fentanyl)

^a Meth-related includes records listing methamphetamine abuse, use, dependence, or poisoning (excluding in remission) as a diagnosis or an external cause of injury. ^b Rx opioids includes natural/semi-synthetic and methadone.

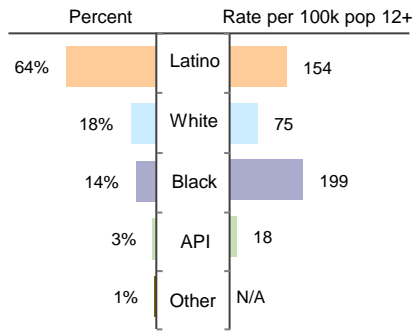
Treatment Admissions

Primary drug problem at treatment admission, LAC, FY1415-2324¹⁶



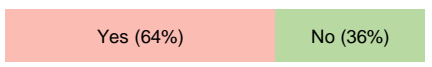
Meth remained one of the most common drug problems among substance use disorder treatment patients

Race/ethnicity among patients with primary meth problem, LAC, FY2324¹⁶

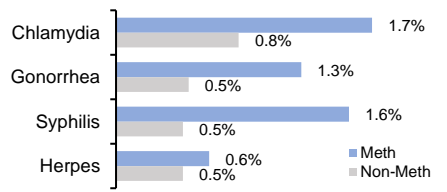


Latinx accounted for the largest number, while Blacks had the highest rate of primary meth admissions in LAC

Meth use before/during sex among patients with primary meth problem, LAC, FY2324¹⁶



Diagnosed STDs among patients with primary meth and non-meth problem, LAC, FY22324¹⁶



Primary meth clients had higher rates of STDs than clients with other primary drug problems in LAC

SAPC Data Brief

Methamphetamine Misuse/Abuse and Consequences

February 2025

Availability

Most of the methamphetamine (meth) available in the United States is now produced in Mexico and smuggled through the Southwest Border¹⁷. According to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection¹, meth seizure weights increased by 445% from 31,938 pounds in FY1415 (fiscal year from October to September) to 174,197 pounds in FY2324.

The majority of drug seizures for meth in the U.S. occur in the western/midwestern regions. In 2022, Los Angeles was among the cities with the highest percentages of all drugs seized and submitted to forensic laboratories that were identified as meth at 63%, which was higher than the national average of 29%¹⁸.

Prevalence

According to the 2023 National Survey on Drug Use and Health², among individuals aged 12+, about 16,130,000 (5.7%) had ever used meth, 2,621,000 (0.9%) used meth in the past year, 1,596,000 (0.6%) used meth in the past month, and 78,000 initiated meth use in the U.S.

Meth use increased with age and was highest for those aged 35-49 years. According to the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey¹⁹, ever use of meth among high school students in LAC (2.0%) was higher than the national average (1.8%).

Health Conditions

Meth use is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular conditions (e.g., heart attack⁵, heart failure⁶, stroke⁷), brain conditions (e.g., psychosis³, depression³, suicide attempt³, Parkinson's disease⁸, schizophrenia¹³), blood-borne and sexually transmitted infections (e.g., HIV⁴, hepatitis C virus¹⁰), adverse birth outcomes (e.g., preterm birth⁸, placental abruption⁹, low birth weight¹¹), dental problems¹², and other adverse health conditions.

Healthcare Utilization

According to the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI)¹⁴, hospital discharge records listing any meth-related diagnosis or external cause of injury (i.e., abuse, use, dependence, or poisoning) in LAC increased by 69% from 11,578 in 2013 to 19,607 in 2022. The number of meth-related ED visits in LAC increased by 76% from 11,625 in 2013 to 20,429 in 2022.

Meth-related ED visits occurred mostly among males, Latinxs, and those aged 26-34 years. Meth-related hospitalizations occurred mostly among males, Latinxs, and those aged 45-64.

The mean charge for meth-related hospitalizations in LAC increased from \$43,908 in 2013 to \$71,364 in 2022 (adjusted for inflation to 2022 US dollars). Annual charges for meth-related hospitalizations increased from \$508 million in 2013 to \$1.4 billion in 2022, totaling \$11.1 billion from 2013 to 2022.

Deaths

According to death certificate data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention¹⁵, the number of deaths in LAC listing drug overdose as the underlying cause of death with meth poisoning as a cause of death increased 712% from 161 in 2014 to 1,307 in 2023.

Methamphetamine was increasingly involved in overdose deaths, accounting for 22% in 2014 and 56% in 2023, which was a 156% jump.

Meth overdose deaths in LAC greatly increased for all racial/ethnic groups over the last five years. Sharp increases occurred for all race/ethnicities from 2018 to 2023, particularly for Blacks.

In LAC, overdose deaths that jointly listed meth and opioid poisoning as causes of death increased over the past decade, with a growing presence of synthetic opioids since 2016. In 2023, nearly two thirds (64%) of meth overdose deaths co-involved synthetic opioids (particularly illicitly manufactured fentanyl).

However, regardless of opioid involvement, meth overdose deaths have steadily increased since 2014 and remain high. Specifically, meth overdose deaths not involving opioids increased by 58% from 277 deaths in 2018 to 439 deaths in 2023.

Treatment Admissions

According to the Los Angeles County Participant Reporting System and Sage data¹⁶, in FY1819 (fiscal year July to June), meth surpassed heroin to become the most common reported drug problem at admission to publicly funded substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs in LAC, and had since remained the top drug problem through FY2223.

In FY2324, primary meth admissions accounted for 28.9% of all treatment admissions to publicly funded SUD treatment programs, just under primary alcohol admissions (29.2%), which has been steadily increasing since FY1617.

In FY2324, Latinx (64%) patients accounted for the largest proportion of SUD treatment admissions with meth as the primary drug problem, followed by White (18%), Black (14%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (3%) clients.

The rate of primary meth admissions was highest among Black patients (199), followed by Latinx clients (154), White (75) and Asian/Pacific Islander (18) patients per 100,000 population aged 12 or older in FY2324.

In FY2324, 64% of patients who reported meth as their primary drug problem had used meth before or during sex in the past year.

Compared to patients who reported other primary drug problems, primary meth patients had higher rates of diagnosed chlamydia (1.7% vs. 0.8%), gonorrhea (1.3% vs. 0.5%), syphilis (1.6% vs. 0.5%), and herpes (0.6% vs 0.5%).

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