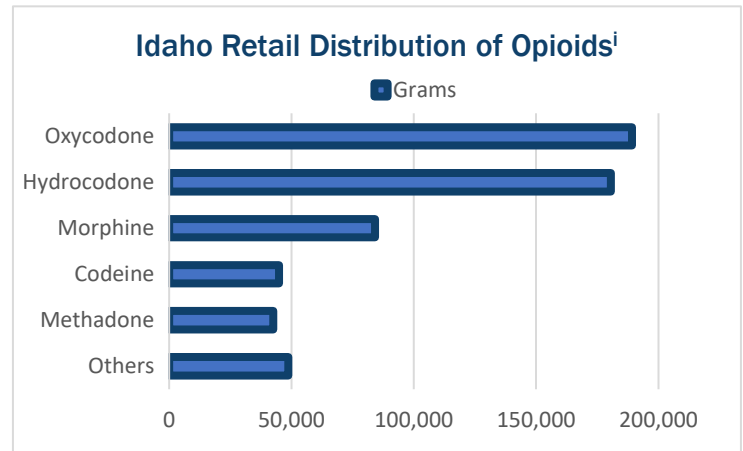


Prescription opioids can be used to help relieve moderate-to-severe pain and are often prescribed following a surgery or injury, or for certain health conditions. Opioids work by binding to opioid receptors on the nerve cells in the brain and body to reduce pain and suppress coughs. They can also cause intense euphoria or high that leads the body to dependence and/or addiction. Side effects include sleepiness, constipation, and nausea, while symptoms of an overdose may include shallow breathing, slowed heart rate and loss of consciousness.

Prescription Pain Relievers

Prescription opioids, such as oxycodone, carry serious risk of addiction and overdose, especially with prolonged use. It is important to dispose of opioid medicines as soon as they are no longer needed. Studies show that six percent of opioid naïve patients are likely to persist using opioidsⁱ, leading to misuse or developing an opioid use disorder.

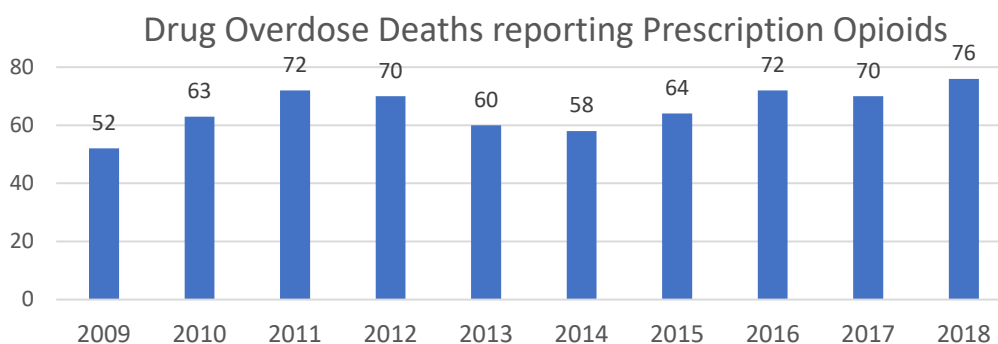
In 2019, opioids accounted for **1,156,889 prescriptions** in Idaho.ⁱⁱ They were dispensed at a rate of **53.4 opioid prescriptions per 100 persons**, down from 70.3 per 100 persons in 2017. Although this was a 24% decrease, **Idaho remains higher than the national average** of 46.7 opioid prescriptions per 100 persons.ⁱⁱⁱ



According to the Idaho Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2019, 14.2% of high school students in Idaho reported misusing prescription pain medicine at least one or more times during their life.^{iv} In 2018, almost 4% of Idahoans (approximately 64,000) admitted to pain reliever misuse within the past year, and 0.64% (approximately 12,000) had a pain reliever misuse disorder.^v

Estimates for prescription drug-related arrests have almost doubled between 2009-2018. The counties with the highest arrest rates per 1,000 residents are Clark (3.46), Adams (3.09) and Benewah (2.27).^{vi}

The number of overdose deaths reporting prescription opioids is trending up in Idaho.^{viii}



ⁱ PubMed, New Persistent Opioid Use After Minor and Major Surgical Procedures in US Adults. June 21, 2017.

ⁱⁱ Idaho Board of Pharmacy.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/maps/rxrate-maps.html>.

^{iv} Idaho Youth Behavior Risk Survey, Idaho State Department of Education, 2019.

^v National Survey of Drug Use and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2017-2018.

^{vi} National Incidence Based Reporting System (NIBRS), Idaho State Police 2009-2018.

^{viii} "Idaho Drug Overdose Deaths – 2018", Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, 2019.