

# Prescription Nation

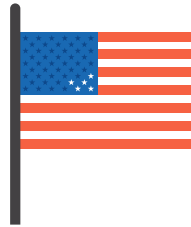
## Addressing America's Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic

When used responsibly, prescription drugs can help people lead healthier lives. When abused, however, they can be fatal, causing more deaths in America than car crashes.

### The worst drug epidemic today



Since 1999, the number of prescription painkiller deaths has risen by **more than 300%**.



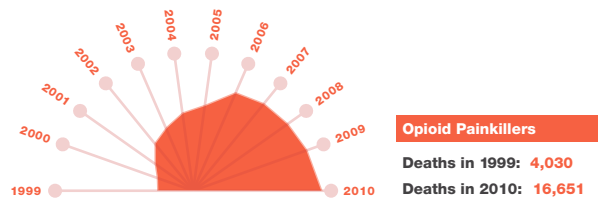
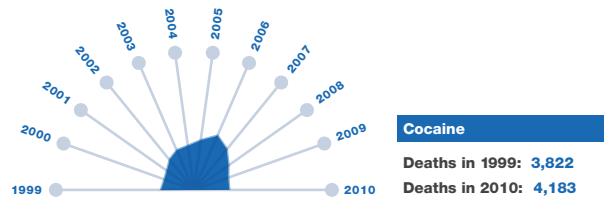
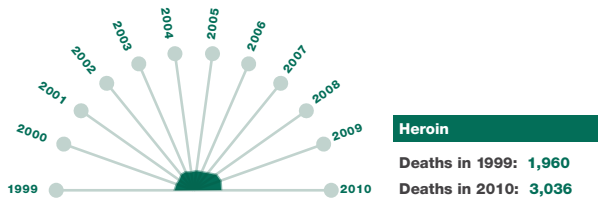
**45 U.S. citizens die every day** from unintentional overdoses on prescription pain relievers.



Nearly **1 in 20** Americans age 12 or older report using prescription painkillers recreationally in the past year.

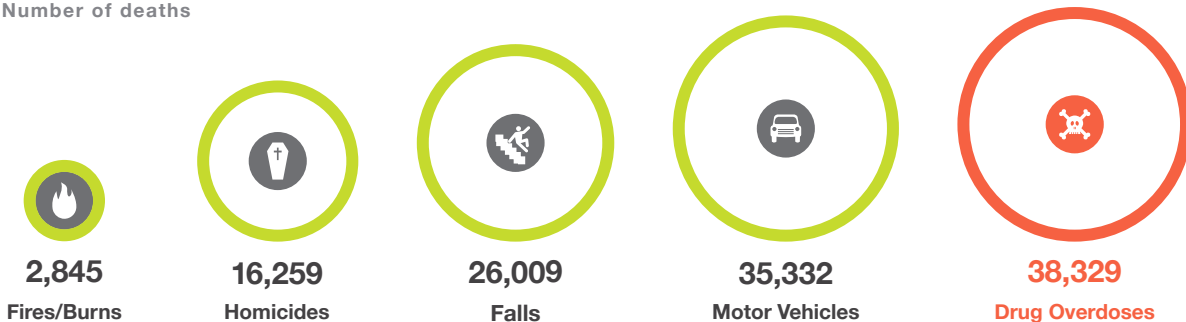
### Unintentional drug overdoses, by major drug type (1999–2010)

Number of deaths



### Unintentional overdoses vs. Other causes of death in 2010

Number of deaths



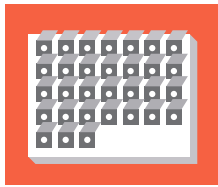
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## Addressing America's Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic

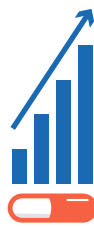
When used responsibly, prescription drugs can help people lead healthier lives. When abused, however, they can be fatal, causing more deaths in America than car crashes.

### How does it happen? The road to overdose

#### Overprescription



Enough prescription painkillers were provided in 2010 to medicate every American **around the clock for an entire month.**



**4x**

From 1999 to 2010, prescription painkillers sold to pharmacies, hospitals, and doctors' offices grew by **4 times.**

#### Common brands of opioid painkillers:



#### High doses and multiple doctors

The majority of people who overdose receive prescription painkillers from multiple doctors or are prescribed high daily doses.

Percentage of prescription painkiller overdose cases, by risk case



**20%**

Patients seeing one doctor, low dosage received



**40%**

Patients seeing one doctor, high dosage received



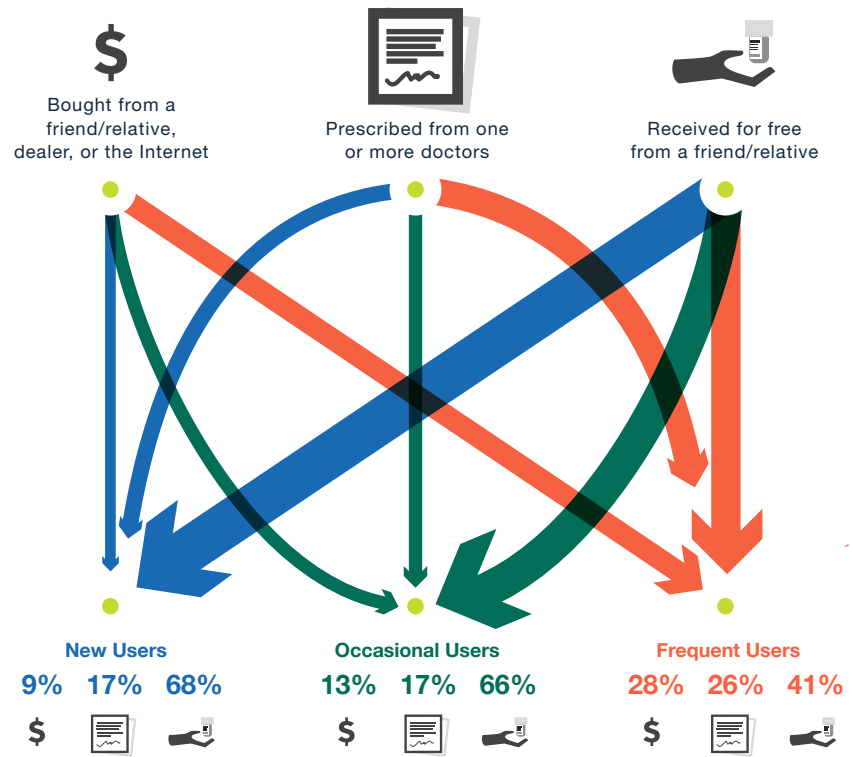
**40%**

Patients seeing multiple doctors and typically involved in drug diversion

#### Friends and family

Users get pills from a variety of sources, including friends/family, the Internet, or by "doctor shopping."

Method for obtaining painkillers



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### Three steps to reduce the flow of pills

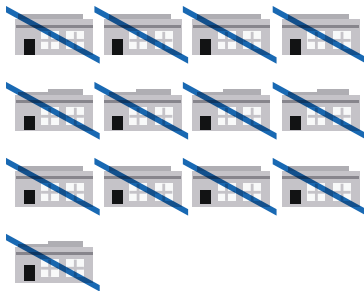
#### 1. Deter the formation of "pill mills."

Pill mills are clinics that overprescribe pharmaceuticals inappropriately for nonmedical use.

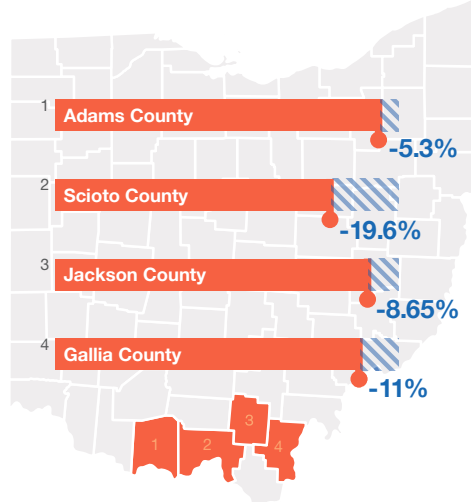
##### Ohio: a case study in what happens when pill mills are reduced

Prior to 2011, Ohio was above the national prescription drug overdose death rate.

Following the passage of Ohio's "Pill Mill Bill," **13 illegal pill mills were closed** in the first year. The bill was a success, as it drastically reduced prescriptions in counties that had the biggest problems.



PERCENTAGE OF PRESCRIPTION PAINKILLER REDUCTION IN HARDEST-HIT COUNTIES



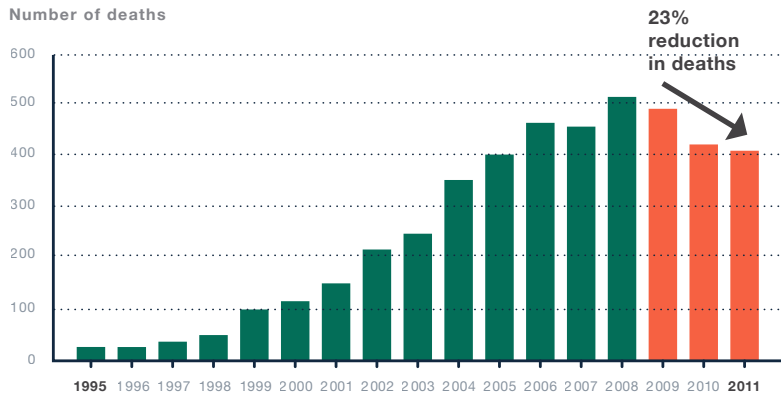
#### 2. Support safe prescribing.

Doctors and other prescribers need clear guidelines to determine the appropriate amount of painkillers needed.

##### Washington: responsible prescribing

In 2007, the state of Washington issued voluntary prescribing guidelines. Passed into law in 2010, the guidelines reversed a decade-long trend of increasing fatal prescription opioid overdoses.

Number of deaths



#### 3. Provide safe drug disposal.

Reduce the supplies of prescription drugs in homes by providing safe, environmentally friendly disposal opportunities.

##### Safe disposal

Americans have safely disposed of unwanted medicines at DEA drug take-back events, thus preventing further misuse.

Pounds of unwanted or expired medications

