

BRIEF: Prescription Drug Misuse in Vermont

Misuse Defined

- Misuse of prescription drugs is taking a drug without a prescription for non-medical reasons – or taking a prescription drug in greater amounts than prescribed.
- Prescription drug misuse is associated with opiate pain relievers such as OxyContin, Percocet and Vicodin, sedatives such as Xanax or Ativan, and stimulants such as Ritalin or Adderall.

Scope of the Problem

- The percentage of Vermonters who are using prescription drugs for non-medical reasons is declining or remaining steady for all drug categories, including prescription opiates.
- At 4.7 percent in 2008, Vermont is ranked 26th *worst* of all the states for nonmedical use of pain relievers in 2008. This is an improvement from 11th worst five years ago.
- The highest prevalence of misuse, in Vermont and nationally, is among young people age 18 through 25.

Nonmedical Use of Pain Relievers (excluding methadone)

% of people age 12+ who have used prescription drugs without a prescription in the past year
Ranking: #1 = most misusers

	Total %			AGE GROUP (Years)								
				12-17			18-25			26 or Older		
	VT	U.S.	VT Rank	VT	U.S.	VT Rank	VT	U.S.	VT Rank	VT	U.S.	VT Rank
2002-2003	5.4	4.8	11	8.9	7.6	10	14.6	11.7	7	3.3	3.2	21
2003-2004	5.0	4.8	26	8.1	7.5	20	13.4	12.0	14	3.1	3.2	29
2004-2005	4.9	4.8	27	7.3	7.1	27	13.4	12.1	20	3.1	3.2	32
2005-2006	5.1	4.8	25	7.2	7.0	25	14.7	12.4	10	3.2	3.4	33
2006-2007	4.8	5.1	30	6.6	6.9	32	13.9	12.3	17	3.0	3.6	36
2007-2008	4.7	4.9	26	6.4	6.6	34	13.3	12.0	16	3.1	3.4	33

Data Source:

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration • National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Prescription Drug Misuse in Vermont

% of Vermonters age 18+ who reported they have:	Total %		
	2007	2008	2009
<i>Ever used Rx drug without own prescription</i>	8.9	9.2	7.3
<i>Ever used Rx in greater amounts than prescribed</i>	7.5	7.7	5.9
<i>Used Rx drug without own prescription during past 30 days</i>	1.4	1.3	0.8
<i>Used Rx in greater amounts than prescribed during the past 30 days</i>	1.1	1.3	0.8

Data Source: VT Department of Health • Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
This survey included questions concerning prescription drug misuse for the first time in 2007.

Misuse by Young People

- Among 8th through 12th graders in 2007, 16 percent reported that they had, at some time in their life, taken a prescription drug that was not prescribed for them. There was no real difference between male and female students.
- In the 2009 survey, students were asked about lifetime misuse of prescription stimulants and pain relievers separately. The overall prevalence remained at 16 percent, with 7 percent of students reported ever misusing stimulants, and 14 percent reported ever misusing pain relievers.

Data Source: VT Department of Health • Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey

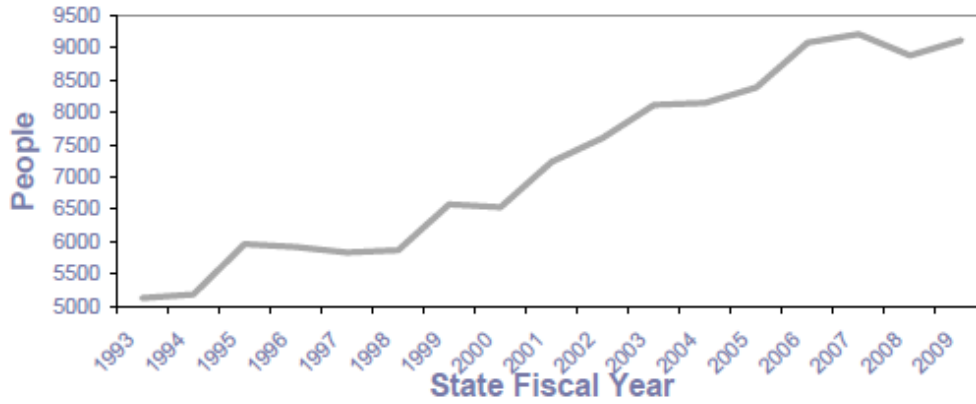
- Among college students in 2008, 7 percent of male students reported using opiates in the past year, compared to 2 percent of female students.

Data Source: 2008 VT Core Survey of College Students

Treatment Trends

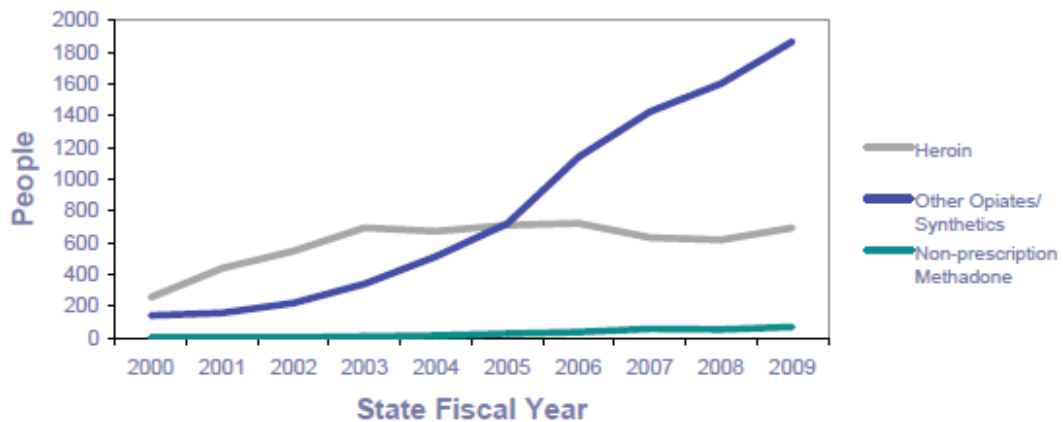
- Admissions to treatment for opiate dependence has risen steadily since 2000. These numbers are a count only of Vermonters receiving treatment at ADAP state-funded treatment facilities, and do not include people being treated in primary care.
- Vermont had the second highest per capita rate of all the states for admissions to treatment for prescription opiates in 2008. The majority (60%) of these admissions were young people 20 to 29 years old.
- The first methadone clinics for medically-assisted treatment of opiate addiction in the state opened during this time in Chittenden County [2001], Caledonia and Orleans counties [2006], Washington and Windham counties [2008].
- Buprenorphine, a new option for medically assisted treatment, also became available during this time.

Total People Treated for Substance Abuse by Fiscal Year



	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	5123	5178	5961	5914	5829	5866	6577	6531	7235	7609	8116	8147	8389	9085	9215	8883	9118

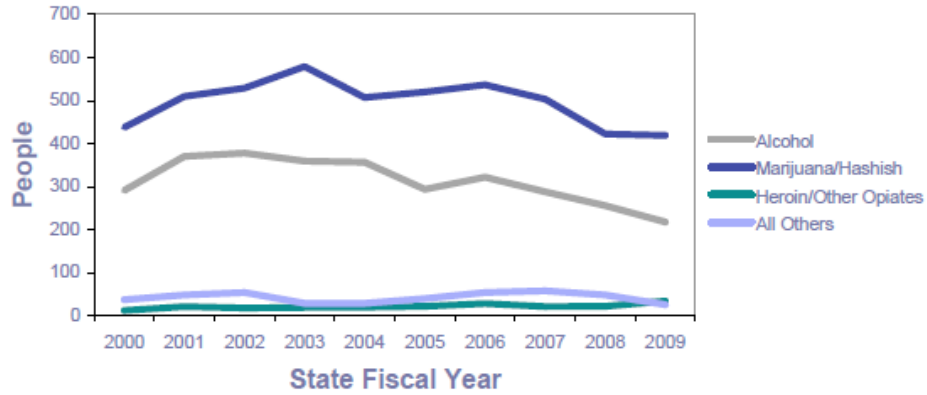
People Treated for Opiate Use in Vermont by Fiscal Year



Substance	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Heroin	256	439	546	693	671	710	722	631	617	694
Other Opiates/ Synthetics	140	156	219	340	513	719	1139	1425	1602	1867
Non-prescription Methadone	3	4	2	8	15	26	36	57	53	69
Total	399	599	767	1041	1199	1455	1897	2113	2272	2630

Data Source: VT Department of Health • VT Substance Abuse Treatment Information System (SATIS)
This reflects only people receiving treatment at state-funded treatment facilities.

Adolescents (<18) Treated by Substance of Abuse and Fiscal Year

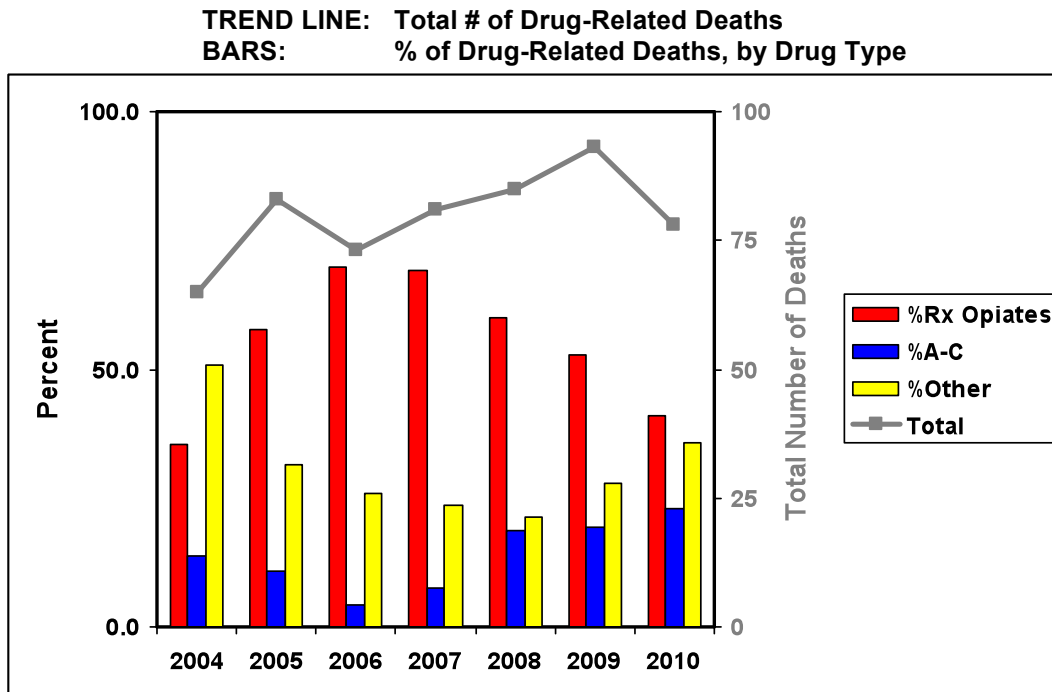


Substance	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Alcohol	291	370	378	359	357	294	322	288	256	218
Marijuana/Hashish	438	510	529	579	507	520	537	503	422	419
Heroin/Other Opiates	12	21	18	19	20	22	28	21	22	34
All Others	37	48	54	29	29	40	54	58	48	26
Total	778	949	979	986	913	876	941	870	748	697

Data Source: VT Department of Health • VT Substance Abuse Treatment Information System (SATIS)
This reflects only people receiving treatment at state-funded treatment facilities.

Drug-Related Deaths

- Deaths resulting from *all* drugs, legal and illegal, have increased since 2004. Deaths related to prescription opiate drugs have decreased since 2006, while deaths related to anticoagulant drugs, such as Coumadin, are increasing. Anticoagulants are not drugs with abuse potential.



Data Source: VT Department of Health • Office of the Chief Medical Examiner