

OPIOID SURVEILLANCE BULLETIN

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MAY 2024

This bulletin¹ provides local and provincial surveillance information. For some indicators, there is a lag time to receive data, so data are shown for the most recent **complete month** available. For more detailed provincial and local data visit [Public Health Ontario's Interactive Opioid Tool](#) and the [Ontario Opioid Indicator Tool](#).

EMERGING ISSUES & NEW RESOURCES

- The CK Community Drug Strategy and recommendations were passed by Municipal Council on March 18th. Check out [Chatham-Kent Community Drug Strategy | Let's Talk Chatham-Kent \(letstalkchatham-kent.ca\)](#) for more information.
- Toronto Drug Checking findings showed 31% of expected fentanyl samples were known to be associated with an overdose; almost all samples contained high-potency opioids; and most contained a benzodiazepine-related drug and/or a veterinary tranquilizer (sign up for alerts here: [Toronto's Drug Checking Service](#)).
- The unregulated drug supply is unpredictable and always changing. Share this information with those at risk.

CHATHAM-KENT ACTIVITY

EMS Calls ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 suspect opioid poisoning-related calls to CK EMS in April (60 to date in 2024; 75 in 2023) (Fig 1)• 6 non-opioid drug related calls to CK EMS in April (31 to date in 2024; 119 in 2023)
Emergency Department Visits ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6 opioid poisoning-related ED visits in April (27 to date in 2024 or 24.1 per 100,000; 96 in 2023 or 86.7 per 100,000 (some missing data Oct 2023 to Feb 2024))
Deaths ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 suspect drug-related deaths in CK in April (24 to date in 2024 or 21.4 per 100,000; 28 deaths in 2023 or 25.3 per 100,000) (Fig 1)• 17 confirmed/probable opioid poisoning deaths in CK between January and December 2023 (or 15.4 per 100,000; 37 deaths in 2022 or 33.9 per 100,000) (Fig 1)
OVERALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although the number of opioid-related EMS calls and ED visits and suspect drug deaths were lower in April as compared to previous months - indicators appear to be trending higher so far in the month of May. In 2023, CK males experienced nearly 3x the number of opioid-related deaths compared to females, and nearly all deaths were among those aged 25 to 64 years. Fentanyl continues to directly contribute to nearly all accidental opioid-related deaths.

PROVINCIAL ACTIVITY

Emergency Department Visits ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 660 opioid poisoning-related ED visits in April (3544 to date in 2024 or 22.1 per 100,000; 13455 in 2023 or 86.3 per 100,000)
Deaths ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 308 suspect drug-related deaths in April (1174 to date in 2024 or 7.3 per 100,000; 3773 in 2023 or 24.2 per 100,000)• 2641 confirmed/probable opioid poisoning deaths between January and December 2023 (or 16.9 per 100,000; 2530 deaths in 2022 or 16.7 per 100,000)
OVERALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suspect drug deaths in the past 3 months are decreased slightly from the 3 months prior and remain higher compared to the same time period pre-pandemic (early 2020).

Figure 1. Opioid poisoning-related ED visits and EMS calls and suspect drug-related and opioid poisoning deaths (confirmed/probable) in Chatham-Kent, January 2020 to April 2024

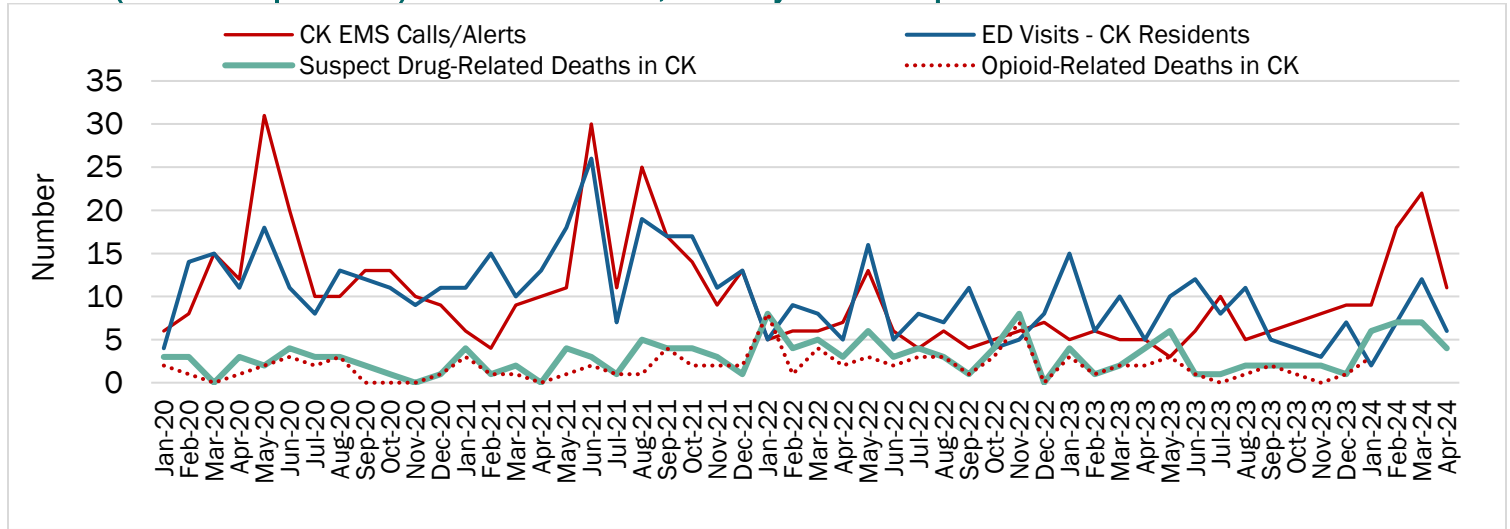
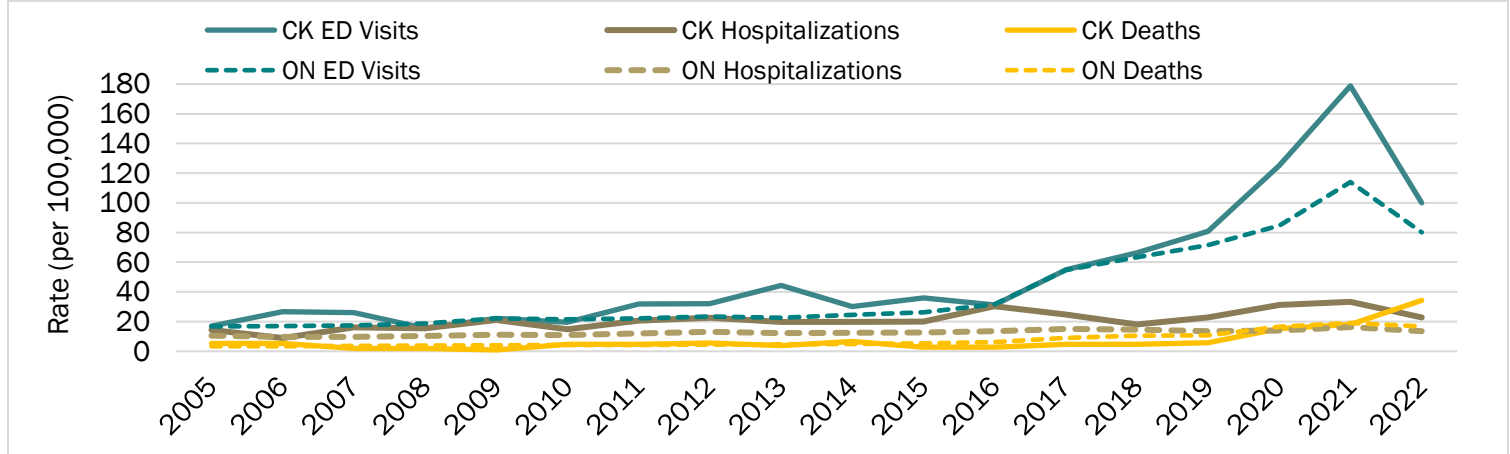


Figure 2. Rates⁴ of opioid poisoning-related ED visits, hospitalizations and deaths, Chatham-Kent, 2005-22



NOTES

- ¹Content and format of this information summary was originally adapted from Lambton Public Health
- ²EMS calls up to and including April 2024 are based on calls for service by month provided by Chatham-Kent EMS for suspected opioid-related calls.
- ³Emergency department visits were provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Weekly emergency department visits for opioid overdose Week 7: May 13-19, 2024). Ontario hospitals are required to report cases of opioid overdose presenting in their EDs to the Canadian Institute for Health Information. CK hospital visit data for October 2023 through January 2024 may still be incomplete due to the regional hospital cyber-attack in October 2023. Results are considered preliminary and subject to change as emergency departments continue to submit data. Rates are based on 2023-2024 population projections, and 2019-2022 population estimates.
- ⁴2019 to 2024 suspect drug-related deaths and confirmed + probable opioid deaths are based on the Monthly Summary table provided by the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, May 13, 2024. 2005 to 2022 ED visits, hospitalizations and deaths were obtained from Public Health Ontario's [Interactive Opioid Tool](#); opioid-related deaths include confirmed deaths only, are considered preliminary and are subject to change as remaining cases are closed by the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario.

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