



Illicit opioids including heroin

Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia

Heroin use among the Australian general population is low, with <0.1%* reporting consumption in the last 12 months of 2019.[1]

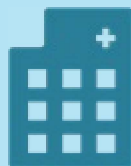


Opioid use was responsible for 0.9% of the **total burden of disease and injuries** in Australia in 2018, and 32% of the total burden due to illicit drug use.[2]

In 2019, **43%*** of people who recently used heroin said they **tried to stop or cut down** in the last 3 months but **could not**. [1]

In 2021–22, **heroin** was the **principal drug of concern** in 4.5% of closed alcohol and other drug treatment episodes for clients' own drug use.[3]

Between 2017–18 and 2018–19, the age-standardised rate of **hospitalisations due to heroin poisoning increased** from 3.2 to 4.1 per 100,000.[4]



In 2018–19, **hospitalisations** with a principal diagnosis of **opioid poisoning** were **more likely to involve pharmaceutical opioids** than heroin or opium.[5]

Prior to COVID-19 in 2020, the **Australian heroin market** was **highly stable** in terms of price, perceived purity and perceived availability.[7]

18% of **drug-induced deaths** in Australia in 2021 were due to **heroin**. [4]





Australian Government

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare



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Main contributors to opioid use disease and injury burden in 2018:

- **poisoning** 42%
- **drug use disorder** (excluding alcohol) 28%.^[2]

Wastewater data analysis indicates **heroin consumption increased** in both capital city and regional sites between April to August 2022. ^[6]





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References

National Drug Strategy Household Survey findings relate to people aged 14 or older unless specified. An adult is a person aged 18 or older.[1]

(a) 2020 Illicit Drug Reporting System interviews were conducted from June–September, after COVID-19 restrictions on travel and gatherings were introduced. This should be taken into account when comparing data to previous years.

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

1. AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2020. National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019. Drug statistics series no. 32. Cat. no. PHE 270. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 03 August 2020.
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3. AIHW 2023. Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia early insights report 2021–22. Cat. No. HSE 242. AIHW, Australian Government, accessed 14 April 2023.
4. AIHW 2023. AIHW analysis of the National Mortality Database 2021.
5. Man N, Chrzanowska A, Sutherland R, Degenhardt L & Peacock A 2021. Trends in drug-related hospitalisations in Australia, 1999–2019. Drug Trends Bulletin Series. Sydney: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW. Viewed 24 June 2021.
6. ACIC (Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission) 2023. National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program Report 18. Canberra: ACIC. Viewed 21 March 2023.
7. Sutherland R, Uporova J, Chandrasena U, Price O, Karlsson A, Gibbs D, Swanton R, Bruno R, Dietze P, Lenton S, Salom C, Daly C, Thomas N, Juckel J, Agramunt S, Wilson Y, Woods E, Moon C, Degenhardt L, Farrell M and Peacock A. 2021. Australian Drug Trends 2021: Key Findings from the National Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) Interviews. Sydney: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney.

Source: Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia

(<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia>).