



# Central Michigan District Health Department

*Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities*



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## **PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA**

**To:** Area Newspapers

**From:** Shelby Pasch, CMDHD Health Promotion Supervisor

**RE:** International Overdose Awareness Day

**Release Date:** August 21, 2023

### **August 31<sup>st</sup> is International Overdose Awareness Day**

Narcan should be in every first aid kit.

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) would like to recognize International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31 as a stark reminder of the harm that drugs inflict on our society. It is a day to remember those who have fallen victim to overdoses, as well as their loved ones. International Overdose Awareness Day also aims to reduce the stigma attached to the issues that families of victims often face. Such attitudes suppress efforts in raising awareness around overdose deaths by unfairly blaming those struggling with substance use disorder. August 31 is a day to come forward and stand in solidarity to reduce future overdose deaths.

“CMDHD offers Narcan for free to anyone through our Syringe Service Program, Exchange Central, at all six of our county locations. Narcan is a potentially lifesaving medication designed to help reverse the effects of an opioid overdose in minutes. Since most overdoses happen in the home, having Narcan nearby can make all the difference,” said Shelby Pasch, CMDHD Health Promotion supervisor. Overdose deaths in Michigan continue to rise. According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), there were 2,633 overdose deaths in Michigan in 2022 (Michigan Overdose Data to Action Dashboard).

In 2020, an estimated 284 million people – one in every 18 people aged 15-64 – had used a drug in the past 12 months, a 26 percent increase from 2010. Opioids account for two-thirds (69%) of drug overdose deaths. The estimated number of people using opioids globally has doubled from 26-36 million people in 2010 to 61.3 million in 2020. There are currently multiple ongoing opioid overdose epidemics in the world; one is driven by the increased presence of the synthetic opioid fentanyl in the United States and Canada (International Overdose

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Awareness Day). In the United States in 2021, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention yielded an estimate of 107,622 drug overdose deaths in the United States, an increase of 15% from 2020. Two-thirds of these deaths involved synthetic opioids, primarily fentanyl. The United States reported an age-adjusted mortality of 216 per 1 million people for the 15–64-year age bracket for 2019 (International Overdose Awareness Day).

For more information about getting Narcan, fentanyl test strips, or other safe supplies for free through CMDHD’s program Exchange Central, call or text (989) 259-4549. You can also visit Exchange Central’s Harm Reduction Vending Machine, located at 4273 Corporate Way in Mt. Pleasant. To get Narcan delivered through the mail for free, visit Next Distro at [www.nextdistro.org](http://www.nextdistro.org).

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org) and follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cmdhd) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/cmdhd).

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*To request an interview, please visit our website ([cmdhd.org](http://cmdhd.org)) and fill out the [Media Interview Request Form](#).*

## Resources

<https://www.overdoseday.com/facts-stats/> International Overdose Awareness Day

<https://www.penington.org.au/overdose/overdose-projects-campaigns/global-overdose-snapshot/> Penington Institute, Global Overdose Snapshot

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2022.html> United Nations, World Drug Report 2022

[https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/nchs\\_press\\_releases/2022/202205.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/nchs_press_releases/2022/202205.htm) Center for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Overdose Deaths in 2021

<https://www.michigan.gov/opioids/category-data> Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Overdose Data to Action Dashboard



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