

Emergency department (ED) visits related to opioids & narcotics among First Nations people in Alberta

ED visit rates by age group, sex, and First Nations status, Alberta, 2011-2015

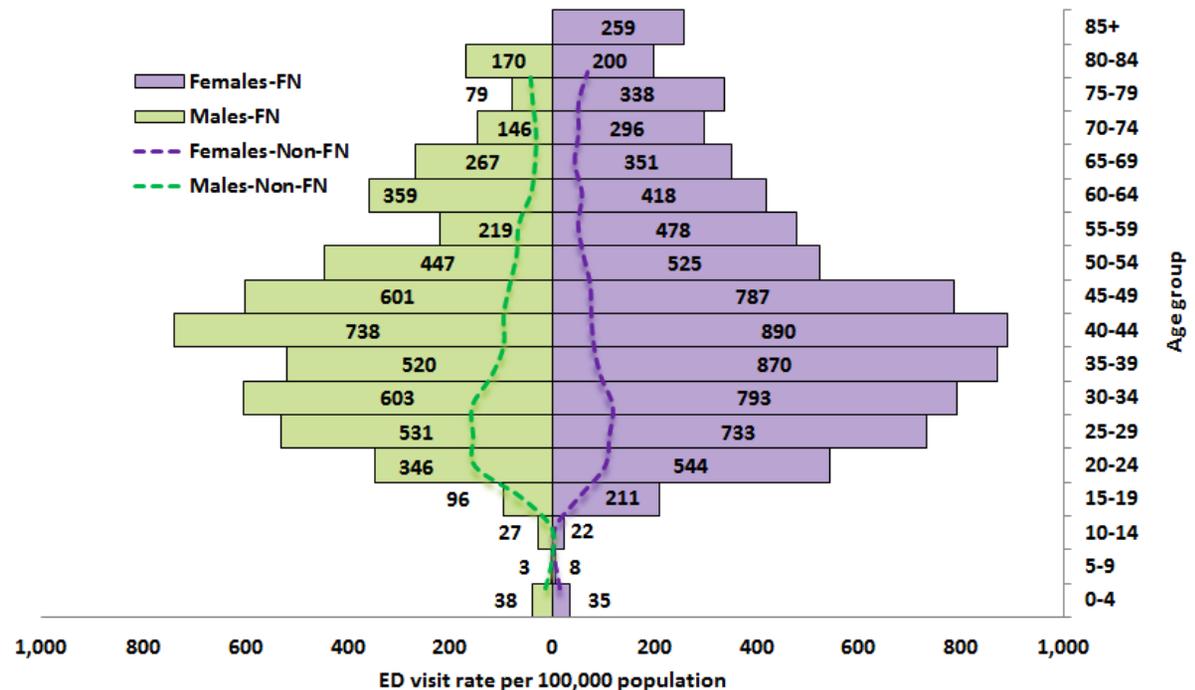
Misuse of opioids and narcotics can result in serious health events requiring a visit to an emergency or urgent care center, including overdosing (poisoning due to opioids or narcotics), and other mood and behavioral disorders (i.e. acute intoxication, withdrawal state). In some circumstances, the misuse of opioids and narcotics can result in death.

In today's edition of *First Nations—Health Trends Alberta*¹, we provide the age and sex specific ED visit rate per 100,000 persons related to opioids and narcotics (including fentanyl) among First Nations and non-First Nations people separately, averaged over 5 years (2011 to 2015).

ED visit rate related to opioids and narcotics is five times higher for First Nations compared to non-First Nations

From 2011- 2015, there were 3,066 ED visits related to opioids and narcotics among First Nations persons, and 14,362 among non-First Nations persons. The overall rate among First Nations persons (380 per 100,000) was approximately five times higher than the rate among non-First Nations persons (75 per 100,000).

First Nations females had the highest 5 year averaged ED visit rates across both groups (446 per 100,000), with the highest rates occurring among First Nations females aged 40-44 years. This contrasted with non-First Nations persons, where males aged 30-34 among this group had the highest rates. Since 2011, ED visit rates have increased by 124 per cent among First Nations persons, and by 79 per cent among non-First Nations persons. The largest increase was among younger aged individuals in both groups, in particular individuals aged 20-29 years. Note that these results cannot be generalized to a specific First Nation community.



¹ This is the 9th in a series of First Nations-specific Health Trends compiled in collaboration by Alberta Health and the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre (AFNIGC). To suggest future topics, please contact the AFNIGC (communications@afnigc.ca; 403-539-5775).