

SUICIDE TOXICOLOGY AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG REGISTRY INFORMATION

2025



DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES**

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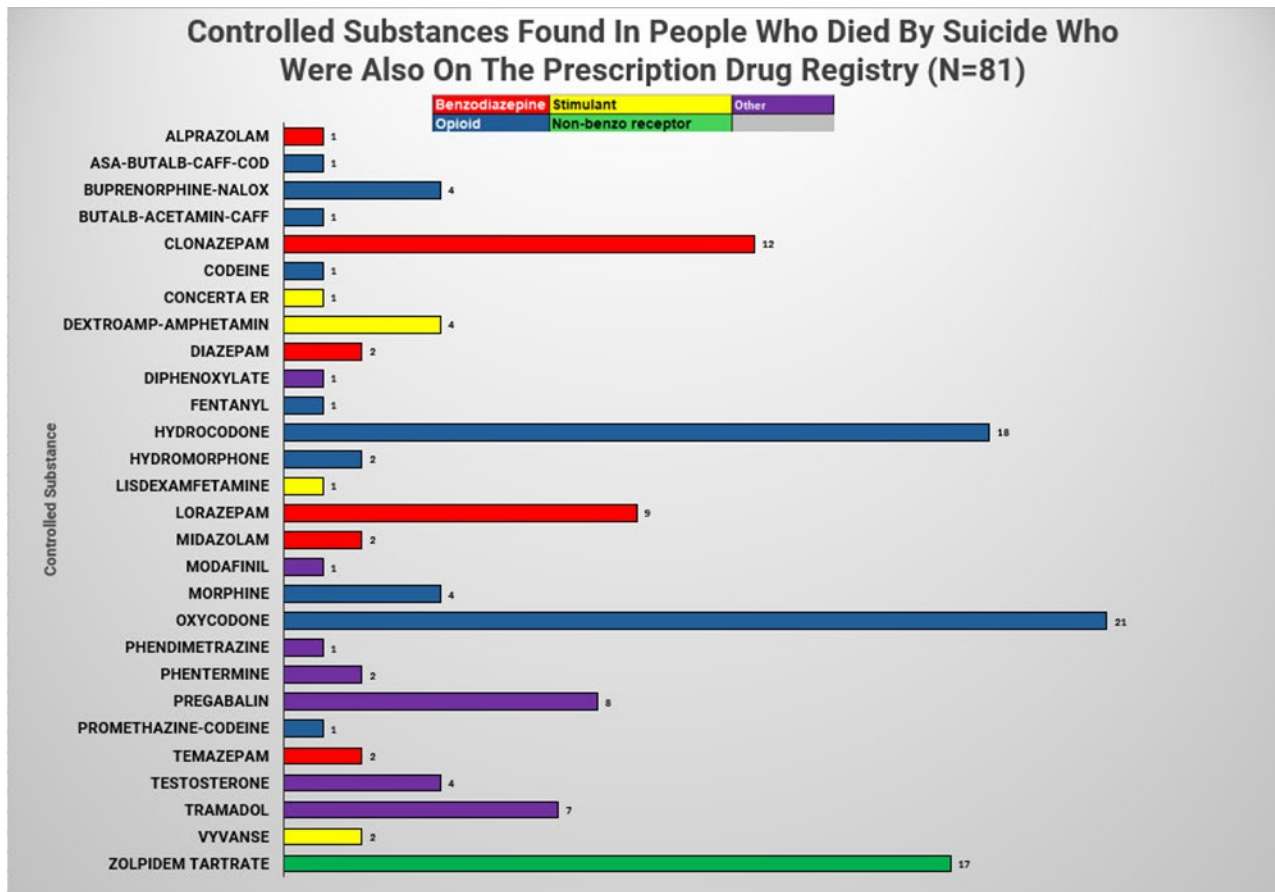
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OVERVIEW

During the 2023 legislative session, the Montana Legislature passed Senate Bill 284, revising laws related to the reporting of drugs taken by or prescribed to individuals whose deaths were ruled suicide. The bill requires the Department to report annually to the Legislature on toxicology and prescription drug registry information for deaths ruled as suicides.

The following data was based on the suicides that occurred in Montana in 2024. These cases were cross-referenced with the Montana Prescription Drug Registry. Eighty-one of these cases were also identified in the Montana Prescription Drug Registry. Twenty-seven controlled substances were identified. The chart on the following page shows which controlled substances were prescribed to the 81 people who died by suicide. These medications were prescribed within the 90 days prior to each individual's death. The second graph shows the primary medical use of each controlled substance.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES PRESCRIBED TO PEOPLE WHO DIED BY SUICIDE WHO WERE ALSO ON THE MONTANA PRESCRIPTION DRUG REGISTRY



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Of the 81 suicide cases identified in the Montana Prescription Drug Registry:

- 35% (28/81) were prescribed a benzodiazepine.
 - Of that 35%, 43% (12/28) were clonazepam.
 - Of that 35%, 32% (9/28) were lorazepam.
- 67% (54/81) were prescribed an opioid.
 - Of that 67%, 33% (18/54) were hydrocodone.
 - Of that 67%, 39% (21/54) were oxycodone.
- 10% (8/81) were prescribed a stimulant.
- 21% (17/81) were prescribed a non-benzodiazepine receptor modulator (zolpidem tartrate).
- 47% (38/81) of the cases were prescribed two or more medications.
- 25% (20/81) used two or more forms of payment to pay for one or more medications.
 - 38% (31/81) of the prescriptions were paid partially or completely by Medicare or Medicaid.
 - 48% (39/81) of the prescriptions were paid partially or completely by commercial insurance.

GRAPH INDICATING THE PRIMARY MEDICAL USE OF EACH OF THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Controlled Substance	#	Primary Use of the Controlled Substance
ALPRAZOLAM	1	The most commonly prescribed psychotropic medication in the United States. Alprazolam is frequently prescribed to manage panic and anxiety disorders.
BUTALBITAL; ASPIRIN; CAFFEINE; CODEINE	1	Butalbital, aspirin, caffeine, and codeine is a combination medication used to relieve symptoms of tension (or muscle contraction) headaches.
BUTALBITAL- ACETAMINOPHEN- CAFFEINE	1	Butalbital, acetaminophen, and caffeine is a combination medication used to treat tension headaches.
BUPRENORPHINE- NALOXONE	4	Buprenorphine and naloxone (Suboxone) is a combination medication primarily used for the treatment of opioid use disorder
CLONAZEPAM	12	A benzodiazepine drug used for the acute treatment of panic disorder, epilepsy, and nonconvulsive status epilepticus.

CODEINE	1	Codeine is an opioid medication used to relieve mild to moderate pain and suppress coughs.
CONCERTA ER	1	Concerta (methylphenidate HCl) Extended-release is used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
DEXTROAMPHETAMINE-AMPHETAMINE	4	Dextroamphetamine-amphetamine is a combination medication used to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and narcolepsy (sleep disorder).
DIAZEPAM	2	Diazepam is used to treat anxiety, muscle spasms, and seizures.
DIPHENOXYLATE	1	Diphenoxylate is a medication primarily used as an adjunctive treatment for diarrhea, often in combination with fluid and electrolyte replacement.
FENTANYL	1	A potent synthetic opioid drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use as an analgesic (pain relief) and an anesthetic.
HYDROCODONE	18	Hydrocodone is a prescription opioid medication used for pain relief and cough suppression.
HYDROMORPHONE	2	Hydromorphone is a powerful opioid analgesic used to treat moderate to severe pain.
LISDEXAMFETAMINE	3	Lisdexamfetamine (often known by the brand name Vyvanse) is a central nervous system stimulant primarily used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and binge eating disorder (BED).
LORAZEPAM	9	This medication is used to treat anxiety. Lorazepam belongs to a class of drugs known as benzodiazepines
MIDAZOLAM	2	Midazolam is a prescription medicine in the form of nasal spray. It is used for the immediate, short-term treatment of seizure clusters in patients with epilepsy aged 12 years and older.
MODAFINIL	1	Modafinil is a non-amphetamine central nervous system (CNS) stimulant with wakefulness-promoting properties. It is used in the treatment of conditions that cause excessive daytime sleepiness.
MORPHINE	4	Morphine is a non-synthetic narcotic with a high potential for abuse and is derived from opium.
OXYCODONE	21	Oxycodone immediate-release tablets, capsules, and oral solution are used to relieve severe, acute pain. It is an opioid.
PHENDIMETRAZINE	1	Phendimetrazine is used for weight reduction in patients with obesity who have not achieved weight loss with diet and exercise alone. The medication works by suppressing appetite.

PHENTERMINE	2	Phentermine is a prescription medication used to suppress appetite. It can help promote weight loss by reducing hunger.
PREGABALIN	8	Pregabalin is a medication that treats nerve pain by calming overactive nerves in the body.
PROMETHAZINE-CODEINE	1	Promethazine and codeine combination is used to relieve cough, runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, or other symptoms caused by allergies or the common cold.
TEMAZEPAM	2	Temazepam is used to treat insomnia (trouble with sleeping). This medicine is for short-term (usually 7 to 10 days) use only. Temazepam is a benzodiazepine.
TESTOSTERONE	4	Testosterone is the primary male sex hormone and androgen in males.
TRAMADOL	7	Tramadol belongs to the group of medicines called opioid analgesics. It acts in the central nervous system (CNS) to relieve pain.
ZOLPIDEM TARTRATE	17	This is a non-benzodiazepine receptor modulator primarily used in the FDA-approved short-term treatment of insomnia aimed at patients with difficulty falling asleep.