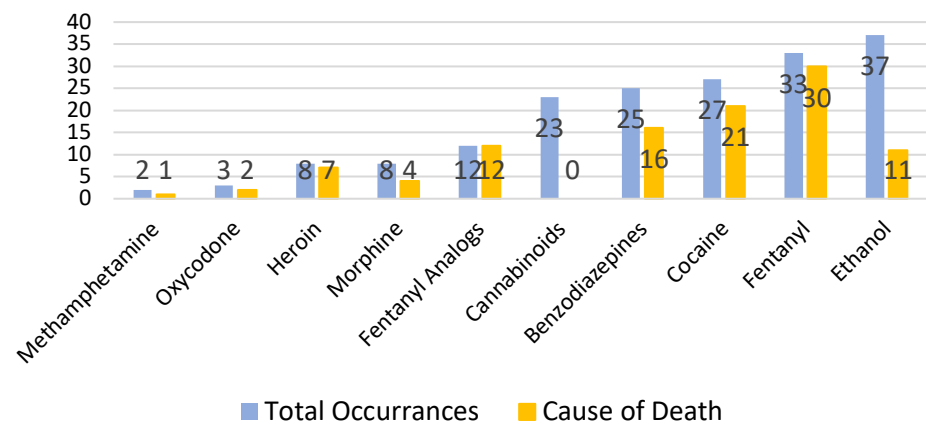


March 2021

Occurrence of drugs among Hispanic Decedents in Broward County

Data from the Florida Medical Examiners Commission document the most frequently occurring drugs, as well as drugs that were the cause of death among deceased Hispanic person in Broward County in 2019. As shown in the chart, ethanol was the most frequently occurring substance and caused 11 deaths. However, fentanyl and fentanyl analogues were much more deadly. Of the 33 fentanyl occurrences, 30 of those were the cause of death and all 12 occurrences of fentanyl analogues were the cause of death.

Occurrences and Cause of Death among Hispanic Decedents in Broward County, 2019



Cocaine was the third most frequently occurring substance among Hispanic decedents. Of the 27 cocaine occurrences, 21 of them were the cause of death. It should be noted that reports of cocaine laced with fentanyl continue to emerge and it is likely that combination use of these substances, especially among the opioid naive, can be especially dangerous. Similarly, there were 25 occurrences of benzodiazepines among decedents, of which 16 were the cause of death. Concomitant use of benzodiazepines with opioids or other substances are known to be deadly.

Cannabinoids, the chemicals found in marijuana, were the fifth most frequently occurring substance, however, none of the 23 occurrences caused any deaths. Thus, it is likely that cannabinoids were used in combination with other substances. The opioids morphine, heroin, and oxycodone were also found among Hispanic decedents and similar to the fentanyl, were often the cause of death. Finally, the data contain just two occurrences of methamphetamine, of which one was the cause of death.

High levels of death caused by opioids highlight the importance of culturally-responsive prevention and treatment services sensitive to the sociocultural factors that influence drug use and access in this population.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 1991-2019 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at <http://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/>; <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/features/teen-substance-use.html>; Florida Medical Examiners Commission 2019 Data; <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/MEC/MEC-Home.aspx>

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