

Overdose Risk Profile

Demographic Indicators:

- White
- Male
- Approximately 39 years old
- High School Diploma or GED
- Employed

Static Indicators:

- History of substance abuse
- History of drug related arrests
- History of substance abuse treatment
- History of mental health treatment
- History of non fatal drug overdose
- Under a physician's care at time of death

Circumstantial Indicators:

- Died at home
- Discovered by family member
- Last act = sleeping
- Found unconscious
- Others present at death scene
- Others aware of fatal drug use
- Others recognized distress
- Died from accidental multiple drug toxicity
- Most likely combinations = (alprazolam, oxycodone, cocaine, methadone)

*The above profile is derived from variables present in at least one third (33.3%) of the 207 closed, overdose death cases in Palm Beach County.



If you would like learn more about our efforts,
please contact:

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PALM BEACH COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Ric L. Bradshaw, Sheriff

Overdose Risk Profile





SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A DRUG OVERDOSE EMERGENCY

Indicators of drug overdose differ depending upon the type of drug consumed.

In general, the overdose victim:

- May not awaken when roused.
- May not respond to painful stimulation such as rubbing knuckles across his or her sternum.
- May exhibit blue/purple lips, face and hands.
- May snore or struggle for breath.
- May complain of elevated body temperature.
- May vomit.
- May behave irrationally or seemed confused.

In 2008, over 300 drug overdose deaths were reported to Palm Beach County law enforcement authorities. In approximately 85 % of these tragic cases, the victim's body was found to contain more than one commonly abused drug. Frequently, a variety of illicit substances (Heroin and Cocaine) and prescription drugs (Methadone, Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, Alprazolam) were the direct and immediate cause of the victim's death. Few people realize the hazards associated with combining any of the commonly abused pharmaceuticals with illicit drugs. Drug users often become complacent not realizing that mixing drugs can create an unintended and unpredictable lethal mixture.

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office is committed to diminishing the number of deaths caused by drug overdose. Part of this effort involves dispelling misperceptions and raising public awareness for the true nature of these all too frequent tragedies.

EMERGENCY

If you suspect someone is experiencing a drug overdose, you must react to this true medical emergency by calling "911" without delay.

DO:

- Tell medical professionals everything that the victim consumed or may have consumed.
- Follow the directions of the "911" operator.
- Stay with the victim until help arrives.
- Choose life first, all other considerations must come second.

DO NOT:

- Allow the victim to "sleep it off".
- Put the victim in a bath or shower.
- Inject the victim with anything.
- Leave the victim alone.
- Treat the victim with home remedies that do not work and often postpone potentially life-saving medical treatment.
- Postpone calling "911" while cleaning up.
- Suffer a lifetime of regret for making the wrong choice.

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office seeks to enlist public support and cooperation in this overall effort to reduce the number of drug overdose deaths. In addition, the staff serves as a resource to other law enforcement agencies and to grieving families who have lost loved ones to this insidious cause of death.

