Prescription Opiate Poisonings among Arizona Residents, 2013

Poisoning was the leading cause of injury-related mortality among Arizona residents in 2013. 328 (26%) of those deaths were attributable to prescription opiates, surpassing alcohol-related deaths.

Prevention Tips

- Never take a prescription medication that is not prescribed to you or take it more often or in higher doses than prescribed.
- Never share your prescription medications with anyone.
- Store prescription medications out of reach with the label attached and with the child-resistant cap secured.
- Keep track of how many prescription pills are in your bottle so you are immediately aware if any are missing.
- Dispose of all unused and expired prescription medications properly. If possible, take your unused prescriptions to a permanent collection site or drop-off event.

Adults 45 to 54 years of age had the highest age-specific mortality rates, followed closely by those 55 to 64 years of age.

- 119 deaths involved a prescription opiate in combination with one additional drug.
- 130 deaths involved a prescription opiate and at least two additional drugs.
- 66% (n=217) of prescription opiate overdoses occurred in the decedent’s place of residence.
- The counties with the highest age-adjusted prescription opiate mortality rates in Arizona include Mohave County, Maricopa County, Pima County and Pinal County.