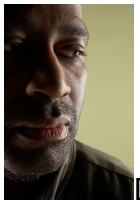
NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

Drug-Related Deaths Continue to Increase in the United States



Drug-related deaths increased 3 percent in 2010, and preliminary figures indicate the upward trend continued in 2011, the *Los Angeles Times* reports.

The increase was largely driven by prescription painkillers such as oxycodone and hydrocodone. "While most things are getting better in the health world, this isn't," said Tom Frieden, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which released the new figures.

"It's a big problem, and it's getting worse," he told the newspaper. "The data supporting long-term use of opiates for pain, other than cancer pain, is scant to nonexistent. These are dangerous drugs. They're not proven to have long-term benefit for non-cancer pain, and they're being used to the detriment to hundreds of thousands of people in this country."

In 2010, overdose deaths involving prescription painkillers increased to 16,651.

That represented 43 percent of all deadly overdoses. Frieden advocates the use of computerized drug monitoring systems that track prescriptions for painkillers and other commonly abused narcotics.

NCADD Affiliates offer a range of services including help for individuals and family members. If you are concerned about your own alcohol or other drug use or that of someone you care about—a child or other relative, a friend or co-worker—please make the contact. You will be able to speak to someone who will listen, assess your needs and provide information about available services, costs and how to deal with another person's alcohol and/or drug use. Help is just a call or visit away—Make the contact now! Click here to learn more.