

# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report 2022 Review



July 2023





# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

## Contents

2023

The Chicago High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Investigative Support Center (ISC) actively tracks opioid seizures, naloxone administrations by the Chicago Fire Department (CFD), and drug overdoses throughout the Chicago HIDTA area of responsibility (AOR). This information is analyzed and mapped to proactively target identified distribution locations where opioids are being trafficked, primarily fentanyl or fentanyl-related substances (FRS). The presence of fentanyl and FRS in the illicit opioid marketplace are key factors fueling the nationwide opioid-related overdose death crisis. By effectively utilizing and combining public safety and public health resources and capabilities under the National Overdose Response Strategy (ORS), the Chicago HIDTA has successfully cultivated partnerships with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office (CCMEO), as well as the Centers for Disease Control Foundation, to collect and analyze various data streams related to the tracking of both fatal and non-fatal overdoses occurring in the Chicago HIDTA AOR. Chicago HIDTA ISC analysts also rely on the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP) to compile overdose statistics throughout the state. ODMAP is a nationwide database that can effectively identify potential overdose outbreaks in a specified geographic area based on data provided from first responders.



## Introduction



## Opioid and Fentanyl Related Deaths



Cook County Fentanyl Related Deaths



Illinois/HIDTA Counties Opioid and Fentanyl Related Deaths



## Naloxone Administrations



Cook County Naloxone Administrations



HIDTA Counties Naloxone Administrations / ODMAP



## Opioid Seizure Data



CPD Opioid Seizures



## Gang Related Opioid Data



## 2022 Novel Substances and 2023 Outlook

Chicago High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area  
Investigative Support Center

<https://www.chicago-hidta.org> | Phone: 312-448-5662 | Fax: 312-448-5702







# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

## Introduction

2023

Provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics indicate there were a reported 107,260 drug overdose deaths in the United States in 2022, a decrease of less than 1% from the 107,776 deaths reported in 2021. Provisional numbers from the Illinois Department of Public Health reflect that there were 3,154 opioid overdose deaths in Illinois in 2022 compared to 3,013 opioid overdose deaths in 2021, a 5% increase.

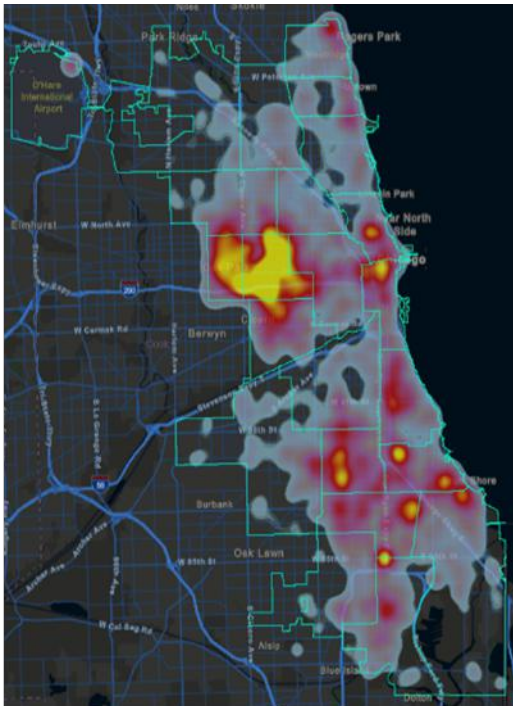
The driving force behind the overdose epidemic in the nation and the Chicago HIDTA AOR is the synthetic opioid fentanyl. Fentanyl or fentanyl-related substances (FRS) have been injected into the illicit narcotic marketplace and are key factors in the overdose death epidemic. Currently, it is unknown what the rate of substitution is between heroin and fentanyl. That is, the percentage of individuals unknowingly purchasing fentanyl when intending to purchase heroin.

In the Chicago HIDTA counties (Cook, Will, DuPage, Grundy, Lake, and Kendall), provisional numbers indicate that there was a total of 2,310 opioid overdose deaths in 2022. Of these deaths, nine were attributable to heroin only, under 1%. Due to lower production costs and exponentially higher potency, fentanyl and FRS provides drug traffickers with a higher return on investment. A small amount of fentanyl or FRS can be adulterated with large amounts of cutting agents for street sale which drives profit margins up. Fentanyl is now the primary, and in a majority of cases the only, opioid being sold at the retail level in the Chicago HIDTA AOR.

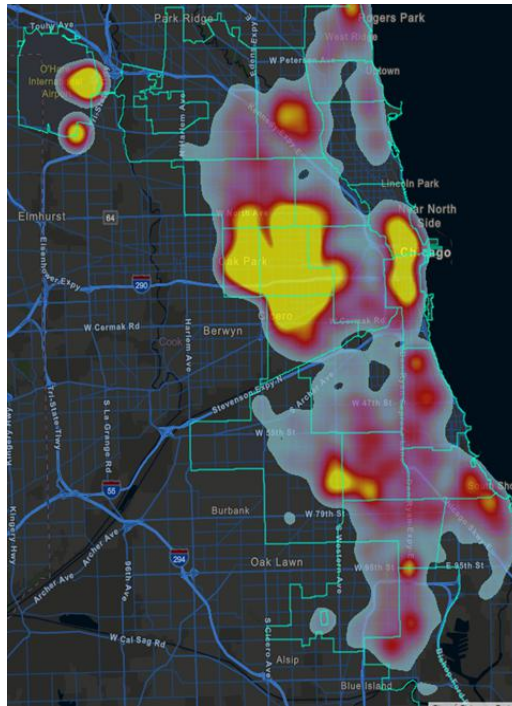
Violence and narcotics trafficking in the Chicago HIDTA AOR are inextricably linked, especially in the city of Chicago where organized criminal gang-controlled open-air drug markets are the primary sources of opioids and other drugs.

This report is intended to provide community stakeholders, policymakers, public safety professionals, and public health organizations with information regarding the opioid overdose epidemic. This dire and ongoing threat continues to negatively impact our communities and destroy lives.

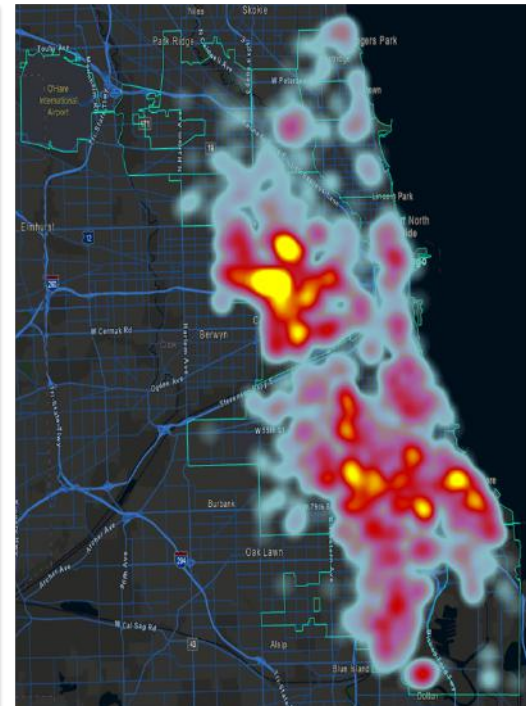
2022 Chicago Naloxone Administrations



2022 Chicago Narcotic Recoveries



2022 Chicago Shooting Incidents



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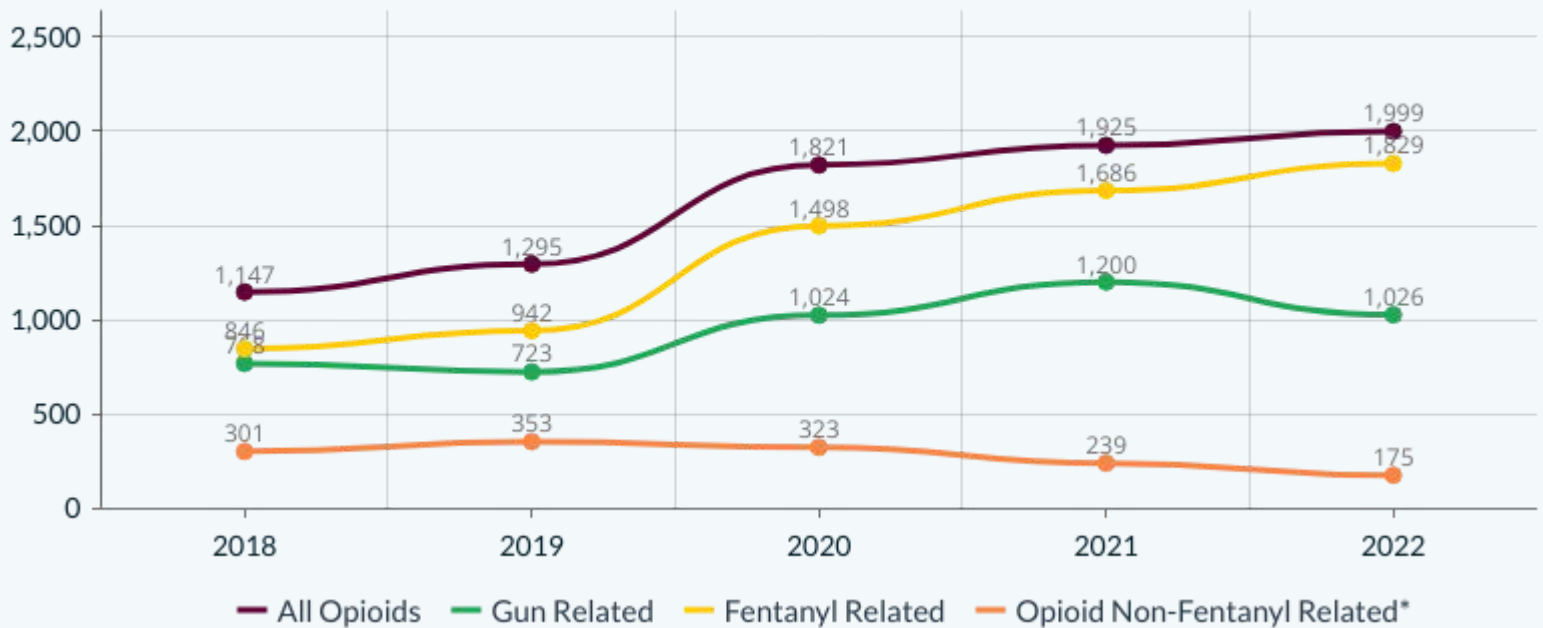
# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

Cook County Medical Examiner Data

2023

## Cook County Medical Examiner Data

Opioid and Gun Related Deaths\*\*

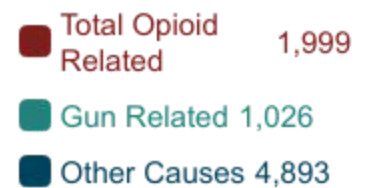
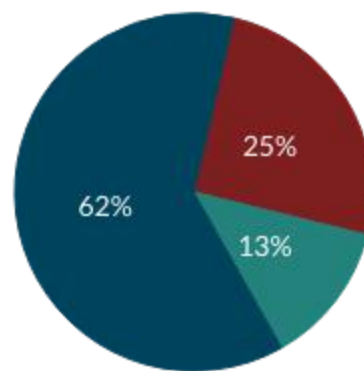


## 25% of deaths

investigated by the  
Cook County Medical Examiner's  
Office in 2022  
were Opioid related.  
(excluding Covid-19)\*\*

## Cook County Medical Examiner Data

Cause of Death Excluding Covid-19



\*\*This contains information about deaths that occurred in Cook County that were under the Medical Examiner's jurisdiction. Not all deaths that occur in Cook County are reported to the Medical Examiner or fall under the jurisdiction of the Medical Examiner. The Medical Examiner's Office determines cause and manner of death for those cases that fall under its jurisdiction. Cause of death describes the reason the person died.

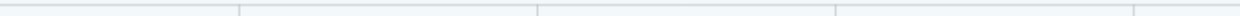


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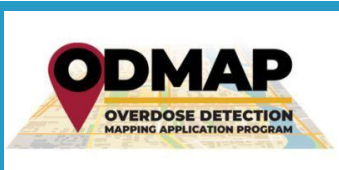
## 2023

## Naloxone Administration Events



Year	Number of Employees
2018	8,373
2019	11,613
2020	14,022
2021	12,322
2022	11,107

5% Increase from 2021



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# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

## Illinois/HIDTA Opioid and Fentanyl Related Deaths

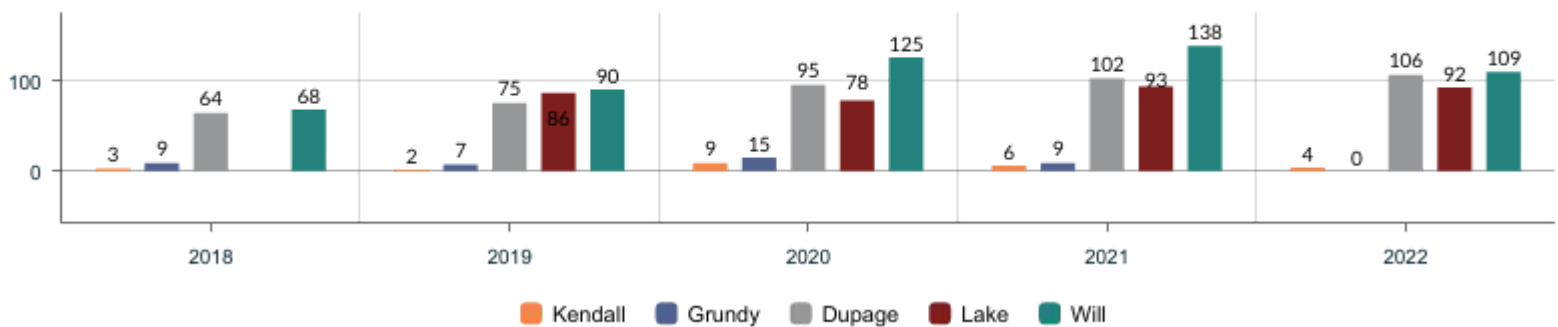
2023

Since 1999, approximately 950,000 people in the United States have died as a result of a drug overdose. In 2022, opioids, primarily fentanyl, were involved in over 81,000 of the 107,260 overdose deaths that occurred in the United States (76% of all drug overdose deaths). Fentanyl, either as an adulterant or as the sole opioid present, now dominates the illicit opioid market in the Chicago HIDTA AOR and is driving the overdose deaths in the region. Drug overdose deaths involving psychostimulants such as methamphetamine are also increasing with and without synthetic opioid involvement. Polysubstance use accounted for 59% of opioid-related fatalities in Illinois.

### Fentanyl Related Deaths

HIDTA Counties excluding Cook County

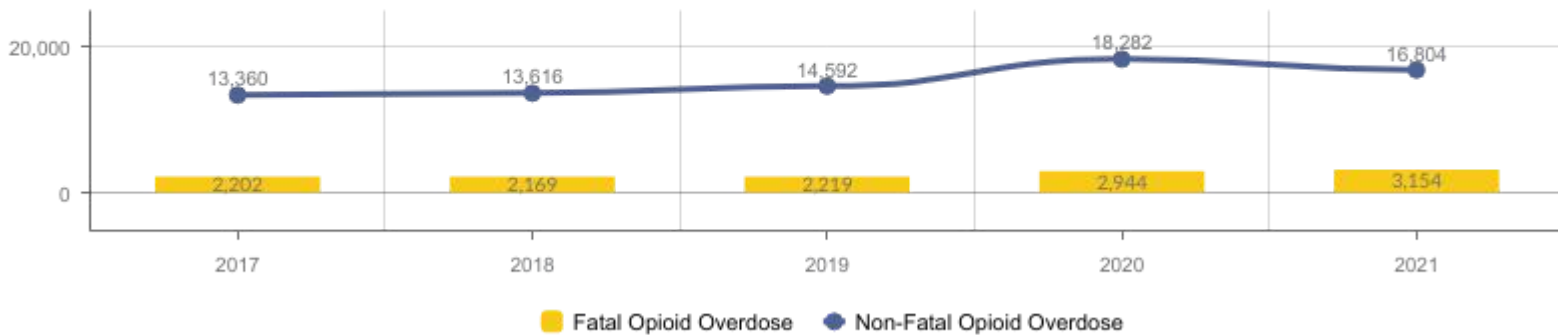
\*Lake County added as a HIDTA County 2019



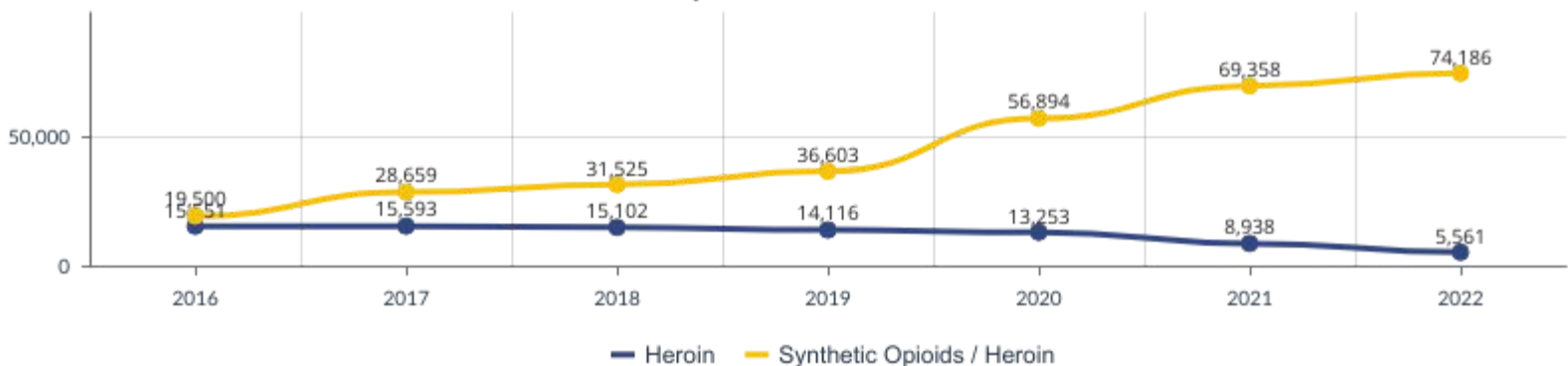
### Illinois Opioid Overdose

Fatal and Non-Fatal

(Data for 2022 still pending. Source IDPH)



### National Opioid Overdose Deaths



(Data for 2022 still pending. Source CDC.gov)



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# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

## ODMAP

2023

ODMAP is a program developed by the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA that supports public safety and public health efforts to mobilize an immediate response to a sudden increase, or spike, in all drug overdose events. ODMAP links first responders and relevant record management systems to a mapping tool to track overdoses and stimulate real-time response and strategic analysis across jurisdictions. Illinois has 287 agencies or offices within 52 counties currently enrolled in ODMAP. These agencies or offices entered more than 12,525 suspected overdoses into the system in 2022. Illinois has 102 counties and ODMAP will reach full effectiveness when all Illinois counties enroll in this free, lifesaving program. Nationally, more than 4,000 agencies participate in ODMAP and have reported more than two million suspected overdoses.

For more information about ODMAP, please visit [WWW.ODMAP.ORG](http://WWW.ODMAP.ORG) or contact Chicago HIDTA Drug Intelligence Officer Vic Markowski at [v.markowski@chicago-hidta.org](mailto:v.markowski@chicago-hidta.org) | 312.414.9442

## ODMAP Reported Naloxone Administration Events



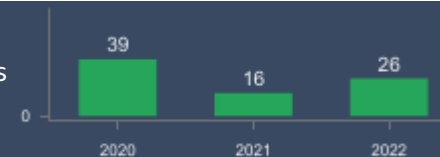
**111%** increase in naloxone events over same period 2021



**Kendall County**



**63%** increase in naloxone events over same period 2021



**Grundy County**



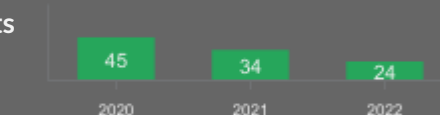
**266%** increase in naloxone events over same period 2021



**Lake County**



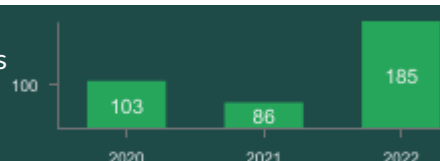
**29%** decrease in naloxone events over same period 2021



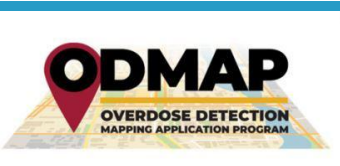
**DuPage County**



**118%** increase in naloxone events over same period 2021



**Will County**

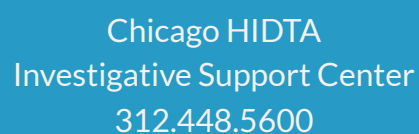


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## 2023

In 2022, the ISP Lab reported that of the 2,334 evidence submissions that tested positive for opioids, 53% of the submissions contained a mixture of heroin and fentanyl and 36% contained fentanyl only. Ten percent of the submissions were fentanyl mixed with other substances including cocaine and methamphetamine. Only 32, or 1%, of the 2,334 items tested for opioids were found to contain heroin as the sole opioid present.







# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

## Gang Related Data

2023

Violence in the city of Chicago decreased in 2022 compared to 2021. Homicides were down 11%, with 704 homicides in 2022 compared to 794 in 2021. Shooting incidents also decreased with 2,830 in 2022 compared to 3,557 in 2021, a 20% decrease. These shooting incidents resulted in 727 fewer people being shot in 2022 compared to 2021 in Chicago.

The Chicago Police District with the highest concentration of murders and shooting incidents in 2022 was the 11<sup>th</sup> District with 75 murders and 353 shooting incidents. These acts of violence account for 11% of the murders and 12% of shooting incidents in the entire city. The 11<sup>th</sup> District is inundated with open-air drug markets which are controlled by organized criminal gangs that use violence to control and expand their illicit drug operations.

The below heat map depicts the concentration of both organized criminal gangs and opioids in this part of Chicago.

### Top Gang Factions with Opioid Related Arrests

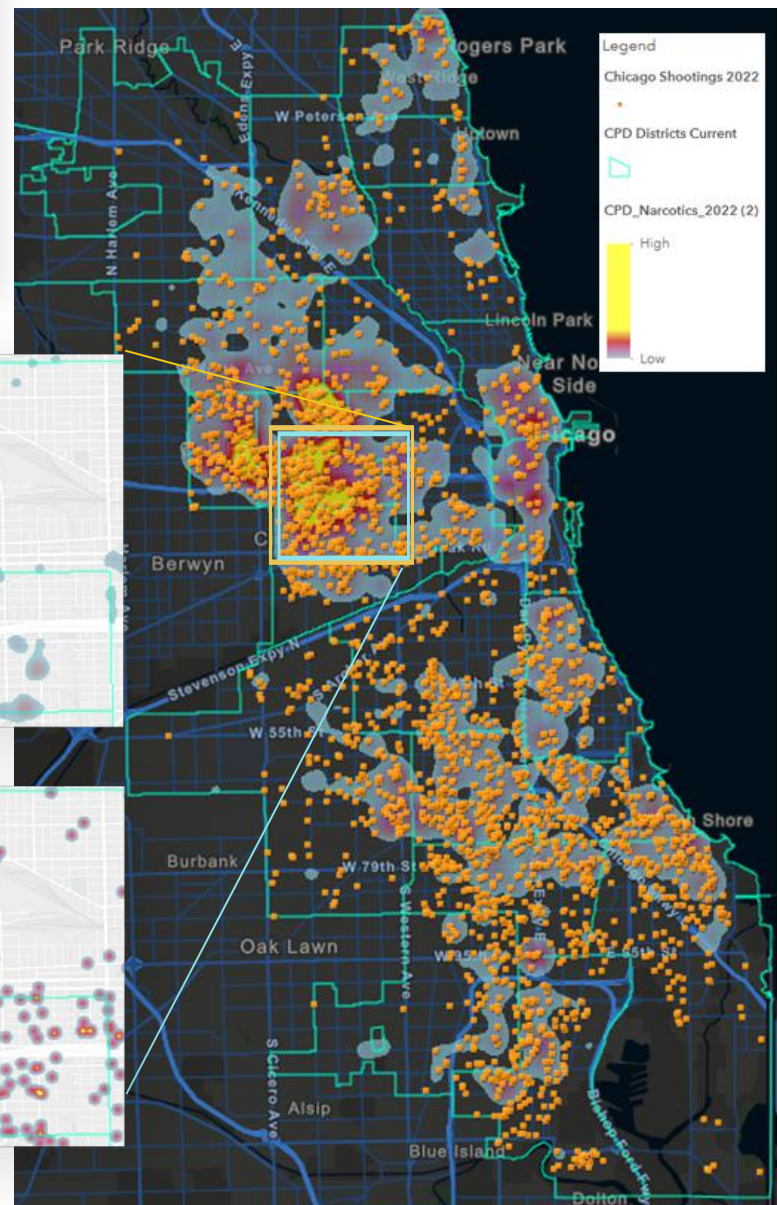
FOUR CORNER HUSTLERS : FAT SHORTY GANG (FSG)

CONSERVATIVE VICE LORDS : CCG (COCO CORNELL GANG)

MAFIA INSANE VICE LORDS : SANE GANG

FOUR CORNER HUSTLERS : BRICKYARD FOURS

FOUR CORNER HUSTLERS : K-UNIT (AKA: BLOOD GANG)



31%

of all narcotics cases are from the 11th District

44%

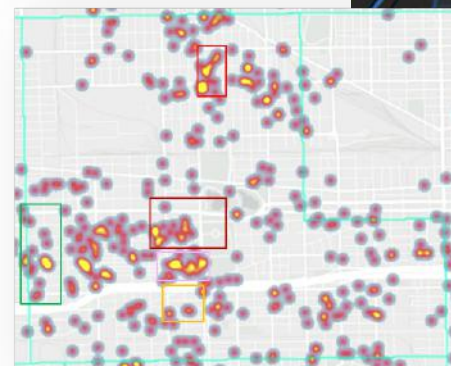
of those were suspected opioid

District 11 Opioid Arrests



The 11th District accounted for 11% of homicides and 12% of shootings for all of Chicago

District 11 Shootings



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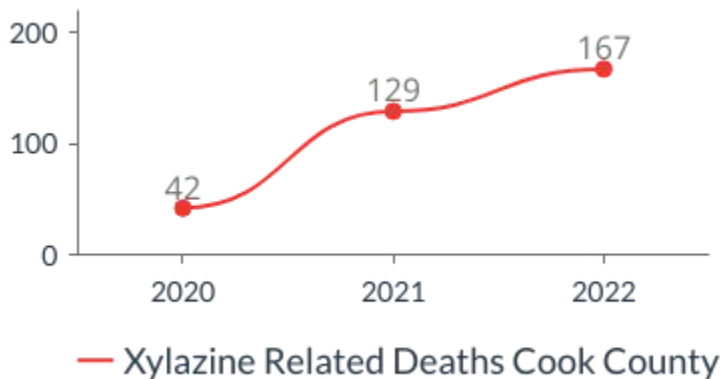


# Chicago HIDTA Fentanyl Report

## Novel Substance and 2023 Outlook

2023

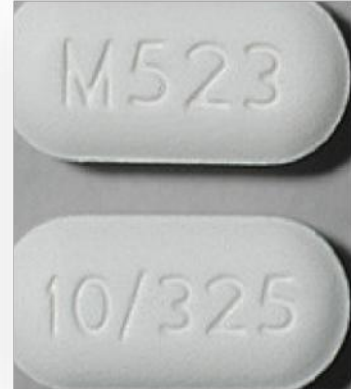
### Xylazine



Xylazine, commonly referred to as "tranq", is used in combination with fentanyl in attempt to extend the high derived from opioid use. Overdoses related to xylazine and fentanyl are further complicated by xylazine's continued respiratory depression after the naloxone administration. There is not a specific antidote for the effects of xylazine.

Nationally, xylazine is found in every state and deaths have increased 276% since 2019. This has prompted a declaration that fentanyl combined with xylazine is an emerging national threat.

### Counterfeit Prescription Opioids



Counterfeit prescription pills continue to be a threat to the Chicago HIDTA AOR. The danger of these counterfeit pills cannot be overstated as the contents are unknown and usually contain fentanyl or other illicit substances. Law enforcement agencies in the Chicago HIDTA AOR continually make substantial seizures of counterfeit pills.

In addition to Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO's) importing counterfeit M30 pills containing fentanyl, domestic pill press operations continue to increase due to the purchase of Chinese made presses via the internet.

## 2023 Outlook

Overdoses and overdose deaths will continue to be a public health and public safety challenge in the Chicago HIDTA AOR in 2023 as fentanyl has emerged as the primary, and in most areas, the only opioid available to those suffering from opioid use disorder. Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO) no longer have to rely on organically grown opium which is needed to produce heroin and will continue to obtain fentanyl precursor chemicals from China, and to a lesser extent India. By controlling the production of fentanyl, Mexican DTOs can maximize profits, eliminate the need to transport bulk heroin from other countries, and essentially control the market.

A serious aspect of the overdose death epidemic is that illicit drug manufacturers continue to produce fentanyl analogs to exploit loopholes in federal scheduling regulations. In response, the United States House of Representatives passed a bill in May of 2023 that would classify all forms of fentanyl as a Schedule 1 drug — currently, only some fentanyl-related substances are Schedule 1, allowing for tougher penalties.

Illinois continues to suffer from fentanyl overdose deaths. In 2022, provisional numbers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reflect for the prior 12 months ending December 2022, there were 3,899 overdose deaths compared to the 3,848 drug overdose deaths ending in December 2021, a 1.33% increase.

Adding to the challenges of addressing the overdose death epidemic in 2023 is the emergence of other dangerous drugs either mixed with or replacing fentanyl. Drugs such as the animal tranquilizer xylazine or carfentanil, which is 100 times more potent than fentanyl, are growing threats.



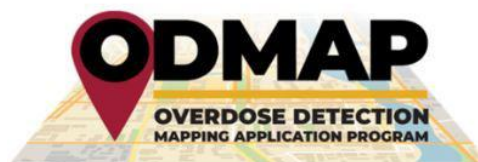
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