

# THE FACTS

## About Drug Abuse

June 2018

### Inside this issue:

- Trucking Alliance Pushes Congress to Tighten Testing **2**
- Astounding Facts: Sea Life Testing Positive for Oxycodone **2**
- Benzodiazepines: America's Next Big Drug Problem? **3**
- Did You Know? Psychemedics Partners With Schools **3**

### We Want to Know!

#### Question of the Quarter:

***What drug are you currently most concerned about seeing in your workforce?***

Let us know!

Send an email to [info@psychemedics.com](mailto:info@psychemedics.com)

## The Opioid Crisis Is Turning Into A Cocaine Crisis

Deaths from cocaine, after holding steady for many years, increased an alarming 52% between 2015 and 2016, according to the CDC, with the trend continuing in the most recent federal data. The stimulant is now killing approximately 13,000 people a year, on track to rival painkiller pills and heroin.

Although researchers don't fully understand why cocaine overdoses are spiking, they know that one of the biggest drivers is fentanyl. Once an obscure hospital drug, the synthetic opioid has taken over the US illicit drug market in just five years, killing tens of thousands of people including Prince and Tom Petty.

In 2016, a synthetic opioid such as fentanyl showed up in more than 83% of the cocaine-related overdoses in New Hampshire; 70% of cocaine-related deaths in

Massachusetts; nearly 64% of those in Maine; and 54% of those in Connecticut. Since cocaine is a stimulant and fentanyl a depressant, mistaking the two might be especially dangerous.

"They might take what they think is cocaine and not get the feeling they expect — in fact they get the opposite — and so they think they have to take more to get what they expect," said Baltimore City Health Commissioner Leana Wen. "Instead they give themselves a fatal overdose of fentanyl."

Good weather and a peace deal in Colombia means the US is due for more imports of cocaine. The South American country — the source of most US cocaine — reported an unexpectedly high yield for coca last year, the second bumper crop in a row. The street price of a gram of cocaine dropped from \$220 in



2014 to \$156 in 2016, according to the DEA, and will continue to drop as more supply rolls in.

Nearly 1.5 million adults use cocaine every month in the US. That's almost three times higher than the estimated number of people with a heroin use disorder. With the price of cocaine dropping and supply expanding, an increase in cocaine use would come at exactly the wrong time, triggering a new phase of the overdose crisis.

Full Article: <http://www.cetusnews.com/life/The-Opioid-Crisis-Is-Turning-Into-A-Cocaine-Crisis-Here%E2%80%99s-How-.BkqAye8TG.html>

### Notes from Ray Kubacki

*Dear Valued Clients and Friends,*

*We are excited to have established another "first" recently -- the first hair testing laboratory to have its Benzodiazepines test cleared by the FDA. As the scientific leader in drug testing, we at Psychemedics continue to advance the science and use our top flight scientific team and R&D resources to develop new tests that will deter people from abusing prescription drugs.*

*You can read more about Benzodiazepines on page 2 of this newsletter, and as always, please let us know if you would like more information about adding this test to your drug testing panel.*

*Best Regards,  
Ray*



Raymond Kubacki, Chairman & CEO,  
Psychemedics Corporation

## Trucking Alliance Continues to Push Congress to Tighten Truck Driver Drug Testing

The Trucking Alliance (a coalition of freight and logistics companies that support the adoption of technology and regulations to improve safety in trucking) continues to urge Congress for more accurate drug testing of truck drivers.

Most recently, the Trucking Alliance announced its opioid test initiative, and is building support for a more effective drug testing law that requires all people who apply for a safety sensitive job in the US trucking industry to verify no opioid addiction or illegal drug use for at least 30 days prior to employment.

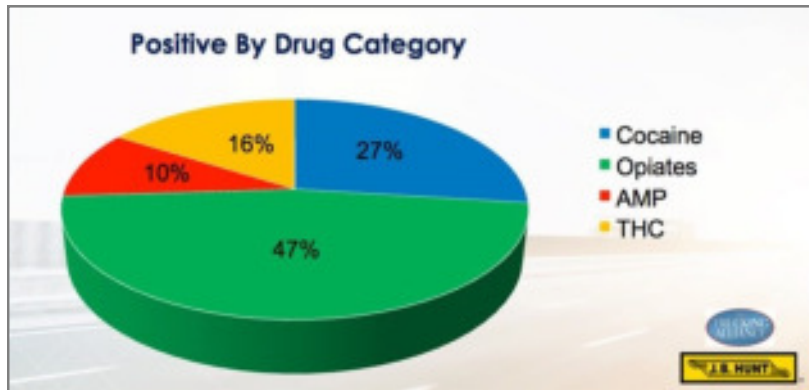
With the currently required DOT method of urinalysis, unless the applicant uses opioids within a few hours of the collection, the drug test can miss their use. Opioid addicts can simply avoid using before submitting to a urinalysis. Hair testing on the other hand, can detect use for approximately 3 months, and hair samples cannot be easily substituted, adulterated or diluted.

“Current drug testing methods for truck drivers are failing,” said Lane Kidd, managing director of The Trucking Alliance. Kidd told attendees at a recent United Nations event that in 2017, J.B. Hunt Transport identified 1,213 people who tested positive for drugs on their pre-employment hair test. Yet, 9 out of 10 of them passed the federal government's mandated drug test, which is a urinalysis. “Clearly, the US Dept. of Transportation’s pre-employment drug test protocols are missing most lifestyle drug users and opioid addicts and that’s a national problem for our industry,” said Kidd.

“We have an opioid problem in our nation and from my experience, we have one in our industry, too,” said Dean Newell, Vice President of Safety and Driver Training at Maverick USA, a major trucking company headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas. Hair testing “will save lives and hair testing is the right thing to do,” said Newell.

[Read the Trucking Alliance Press Release:](https://www.psychemedics.com/blog/2018/05/trucking-alliance-supports-more-effective-drug-testing-of-us-truck-drivers/)

<https://www.psychemedics.com/blog/2018/05/trucking-alliance-supports-more-effective-drug-testing-of-us-truck-drivers/>



**J.B. Hunt found that opioid use was far more likely to be caught by hair testing than by the standard urinalysis.**

*From The Trucking Alliance's UN presentation.*



### ASTOUNDING FACTS:

#### Sea Life Now Testing Positive for Oxycodone!

Opioids are now showing up in and around the bays around Seattle's Puget Sound, and a recently published study showed that mussels had consumed opioids from the area's waterways.

<http://beforeitsnews.com/health/2018/05/as-u-s-opioid-epidemic-skyrockets-sea-life-now-testing-positive-for-big-pharmas-oxycodone-2852477.html>

## BENZODIAZEPINES - Americas Next Big Drug Problem?

While the nation has been focused on the recent opioid crisis, prescriptions for anti-anxiety drugs/benzodiazepines have also been going up. Like painkillers, "benzos" are meant to be a temporary solution to a problem, yet doctors often allow their patients to stay on them for years.

"People who use benzos regularly over months or years risk "dependence, addiction, cognitive damage, more falls, and death," according to Stanford University psychiatrist Anna Lembke. "Long-term use can make insomnia, mood, and anxiety worse. Just as overprescribing opioids contributed to the use of heroin and illicit fentanyl and related deaths, overprescribing benzodiazepines may herald the dawn of a new era of illicit and deadly benzodiazepines," Lembke warned."

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/the-other-prescription-drug-problem-benzos#3>



### Brand Names

Xanax, Valium, Ativan, Seresta, Restoril, Madar

### REASONS TO ADD TO YOUR DRUG TESTING PANEL

- A study performed by SAMHSA discovered that benzodiazepines are recreationally the most frequently used pharmaceuticals in the U.S., and account for 35% of all drug-related visits to hospital emergency and urgent care facilities.
- A 2005 study published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry found that not only did the use of benzodiazepines interfere with visuospatial ability, speed of processing thoughts and perceptions and the ability to absorb verbal lessons, but also after a person withdrew from benzodiazepine use, these abilities did not fully return. Those who used benzodiazepines over a longer period of time were more impaired.
- In a Treatment Episode Data Set report, it stated that almost all benzodiazepine admissions (95 percent) reported abuse of another substance in addition to abuse of benzodiazepines.

### OVERVIEW

- ⇒ Commonly prescribed tranquilizer medications to treat insomnia and anxiety.
- ⇒ Have a high potential for abuse, especially when used with other depressants such as alcohol or opiates.
- ⇒ Symptoms can include drowsiness, impaired motor coordination, impaired thinking and memory, altered vision, slowed reflexes, erratic behavior, confusion, and impaired memory and judgement.

Contact our Sales Team at 877-517-2033 about adding benzodiazepines to your testing panel

### Did You Know ??

*Psychemedics also partners with schools to create drug free environments*

Drugs Are Getting Worse, BUT Not In Our Schools! Psychemedics is proud to be working with more public, private and faith based schools, colleges and fraternities than any hair testing lab in America. All are seeing amazing results. Our children are growing up in the most dangerous time in history and making choices everyday about drugs and alcohol that could change lives forever. Please let your child's school know that there really is a way to make their school drug free. Many choose to send the results to parents and not the school.



Contact Dr. George B. Elder (VP of Schools and Colleges) for more info about our school testing program  
931-924-3143 or [george@psychemedics.com](mailto:george@psychemedics.com)

*"Every parent who has struggled with their child's drug addiction, dependence on alcohol or worse would have given anything to have known their child needed help in time to do something about it."*

*Superior Detection  
of Drug Abuse*

**PSYCHEMEDICS  
CLIENT SERVICES INFO:**

Client Services hours:  
7:30 AM - 7:30 PM CST  
Monday – Friday

5832 Uplander Way  
Culver City, CA 90230

Phone: 800.522.7424  
Fax: 800.643.2354

[www.psychemedics.com](http://www.psychemedics.com)



### **Why Choose Psychemedics?**

**ALL HAIR TESTING IS NOT THE SAME**

*Psychemedics Corporation is the world's largest provider of hair testing for drugs of abuse and has been successfully operating for over 30 years. Thousands of corporations, nationally and internationally, rely on the patented Psychemedics drug testing services. Psychemedics' clients include over 10% of the Fortune 500, many of the largest police departments both domestic and global, and Federal Reserve Banks. In addition, the Company serves schools and colleges around the world. Our team of experts stand ready to help through every step: policy development, communication, implementation and sustainability.*

*Since 1987, Psychemedics has offered the most effective hair testing technology, based on scientifically validated drug testing methods. All hair testing is not the same – our patented technology uses a unique process to release the drugs trapped in the hair without destroying the drugs and removes virtually 100% of the drugs from the hair. Our patent is fundamental to hair analysis drug testing because if you cannot get all the drugs out of the hair, you cannot accurately measure them; and if you cannot accurately measure the drugs, you cannot identify all of the drug users. This proprietary technology provides superior detection of drugs of abuse, and is what sets us apart.*

---

---

#### **Case Studies Available!**

Making the case for change is often about understanding the benefits that others have gained by changing their programs. If you would like to learn more about the implementation process and program results of our customers, please contact us at [info@psychemedics.com](mailto:info@psychemedics.com) for copies of the case studies we have available.