

Drug Early Warning System

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Working Together to Identify Emerging Drug Trends in Maryland

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****Corrected Version of November 1998 Issue****

The data presented in the November 1998 issue were incorrectly identified as narcotic-caused deaths. The data were actually for all drug-caused deaths in the counties listed, including deaths caused by alcohol, cocaine, and alcohol and cocaine combined. This revised issue contains the correct data for narcotic-caused deaths in Maryland. We apologize for this error.

Majority of Maryland's Narcotic-Caused Deaths Occur in Four Jurisdictions

Maryland's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is required by law to investigate the cause and manner of all violent, suspicious, or unexpected deaths that occur in Maryland. As of September 30, 1998, 305 deaths investigated by the OCME were determined to be directly attributable to intoxication by narcotics (such as heroin, methadone, or morphine), either alone or in combination with alcohol or cocaine. The majority of these narcotic-caused deaths (90%, or 274 deaths) occurred in Baltimore City and three other jurisdictions (Baltimore, Anne Arundel, and Prince George's counties). The remaining counties had six or fewer narcotic-caused deaths, including eight counties that had none over this time period.

**Number of Maryland Narcotic-Caused Deaths, by County of Death,
First Quarter to Third Quarter 1998***

	1Q98	2Q98	3Q98	YTD98
Baltimore City	82	82	45	209
Baltimore	10	12	5	27
Anne Arundel	7	9	5	21
Prince George's	12	3	2	17
Harford	6	0	0	6
Montgomery	3	1	2	6
Howard	2	2	0	4
Carroll	1	1	1	3
Cecil	1	1	1	3
Allegany	1	1	0	2
Worcester	1	1	0	2
Calvert	0	1	0	1
Frederick	0	0	1	1
Somerset	0	0	1	1
Talbot	1	0	0	1
Washington	0	1	0	1
MARYLAND TOTAL	127	115	63	305

*Caroline, Charles, Dorchester, Garrett, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, and Wicomico counties had no narcotic-caused deaths during these time periods.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data received from the Maryland Office of the Chief Medical Examiner between July and October 1998. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani of CESAR at erin@cesar.umd.edu.

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