

# NCIS FACT SHEET

## Drug-related deaths in New Zealand in 2015

**433**

drug-related deaths  
in 2015

**8 deaths**

per week  
on average

**13.0%**

of all reportable  
deaths in 2015

Cases are considered drug-related where the death was due to external causes, and where drugs made a contribution to death.

Drug-related deaths occurred in a higher proportion of males than females. The majority of male deaths occurred in those aged 45 - 54 years, and females in those aged under 25 years.

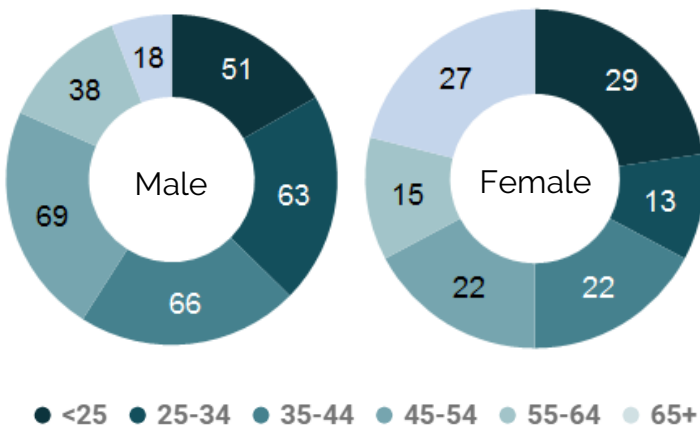


Figure 1. Frequency of drug-related deaths by age group and sex, 2015

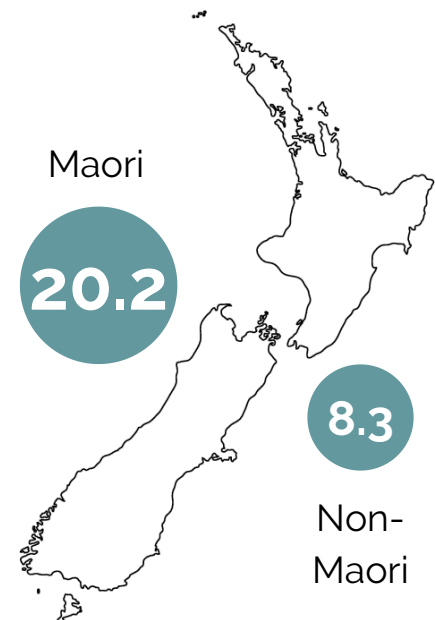


Figure 2. Rates of drug-related deaths per 100,000 by ethnicity, 2015

The national rate of drug-related deaths was 9.9 deaths per 100,000 population. Drug-related deaths of Maori people was higher than the national rate, at 20.2 deaths per 100,000 (Figure 2).

**41.3%**

*of all drug-related deaths occurred in people aged between 35 and 54 years*

Figure 3 shows drug-related deaths by contribution to death. Alcohol was the most frequently identified drug involved in drug-related deaths.

**Primary** contribution relates to cases where drug toxicity was the primary cause of death. **Secondary** contribution relates to cases where drugs contributed to a death caused by another form of injury (such as drowning or a vehicle incident).

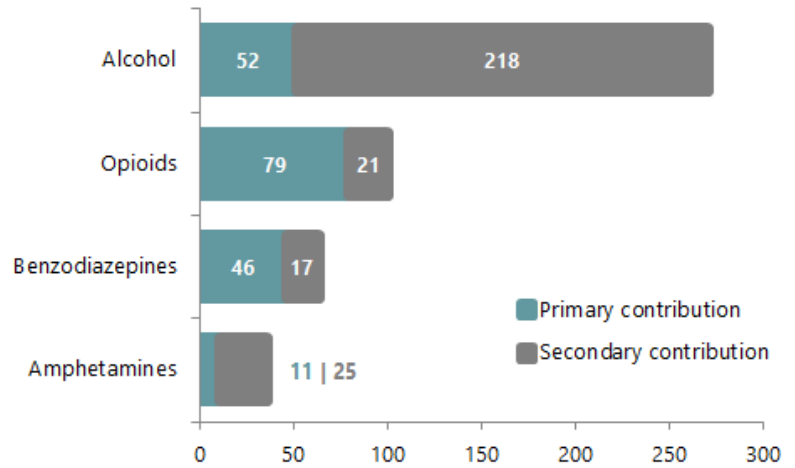
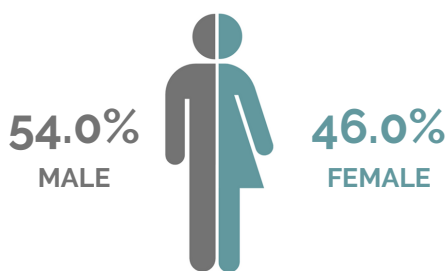
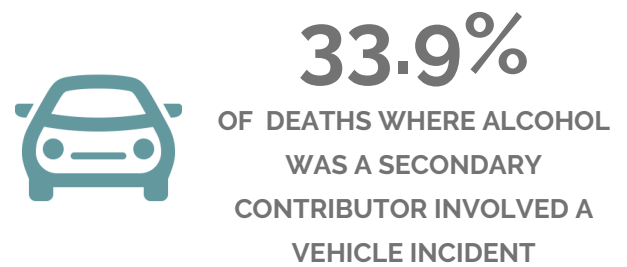
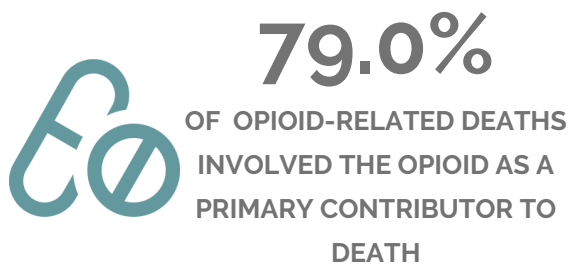
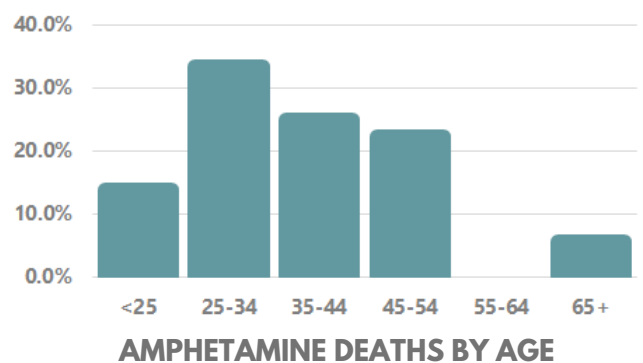


Figure 3. Frequency of drug-related deaths by drug type and contribution, 2015

**Note:** multiple drugs can contribute to a single death. As a result, the total number of deaths for the listed drug classes will exceed the total number of drug-related deaths.



**BENZODIAZEPINE DEATHS BY SEX**



**AMPHETAMINE DEATHS BY AGE**

The data presented in this fact sheet was extracted from the National Coronial Information System (NCIS) in May 2021. The dataset extracted contained every fatality reported to a New Zealand coroner between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2015 that was coded as involving a pharmaceutical substance for human use, and where the coronial investigation had concluded and the case was closed on the NCIS. Population data was sourced from [Stats New Zealand](https://www.stats.govt.nz/). Visit the NCIS website for information on [data sources and limitations](#). To request a comprehensive data report, contact the NCIS or visit [www.ncis.org.au](http://www.ncis.org.au).

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