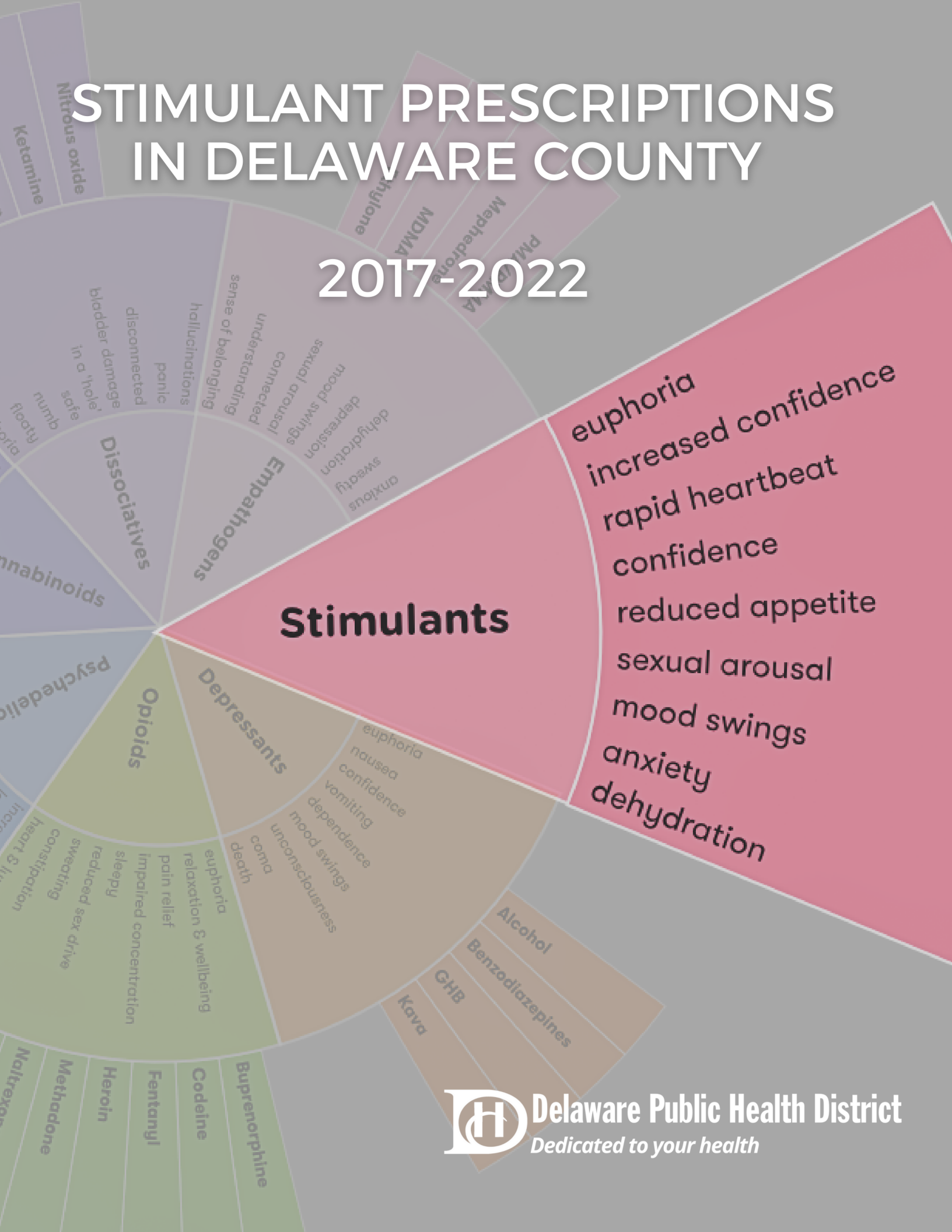


# STIMULANT PRESCRIPTIONS IN DELAWARE COUNTY

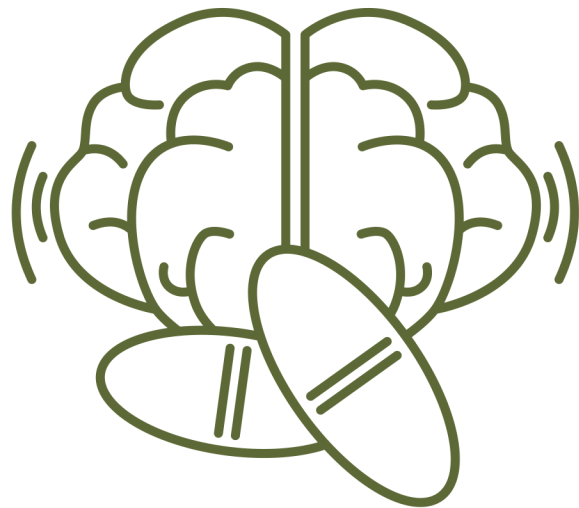
2017-2022



Delaware Public Health District

*Dedicated to your health*

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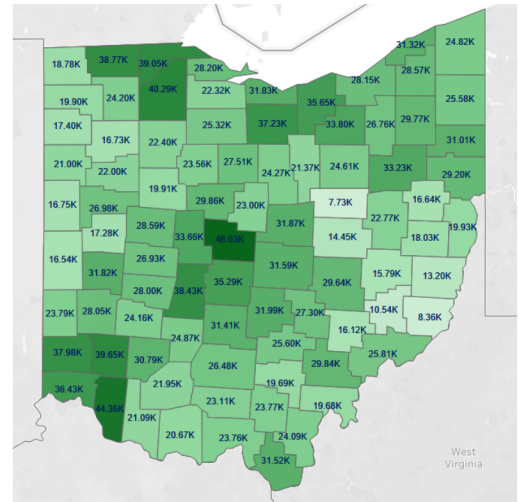
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# Introduction

Since 2015, the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy has been tracking the quarterly number of stimulant prescriptions by county throughout the state. Delaware County has had an increasing number of stimulant prescriptions since 2015. **In 2022, Delaware County had the highest rate of stimulant prescriptions than any other county in Ohio, with 48,000 prescriptions per 100,000 residents. (1)**



Stimulants are a class of drugs that include both legal drugs like Ritalin and Adderall, and illegal drugs like cocaine, methamphetamine or synthetically derived stimulants like "bath salts". Both classes of drugs, like all drugs, have the ability to be abused by those who use them. Individuals who take legally prescribed stimulants may take large quantities of pills or capsules, illegal stimulant drugs can be snorted, injected, or smoked.

(2)

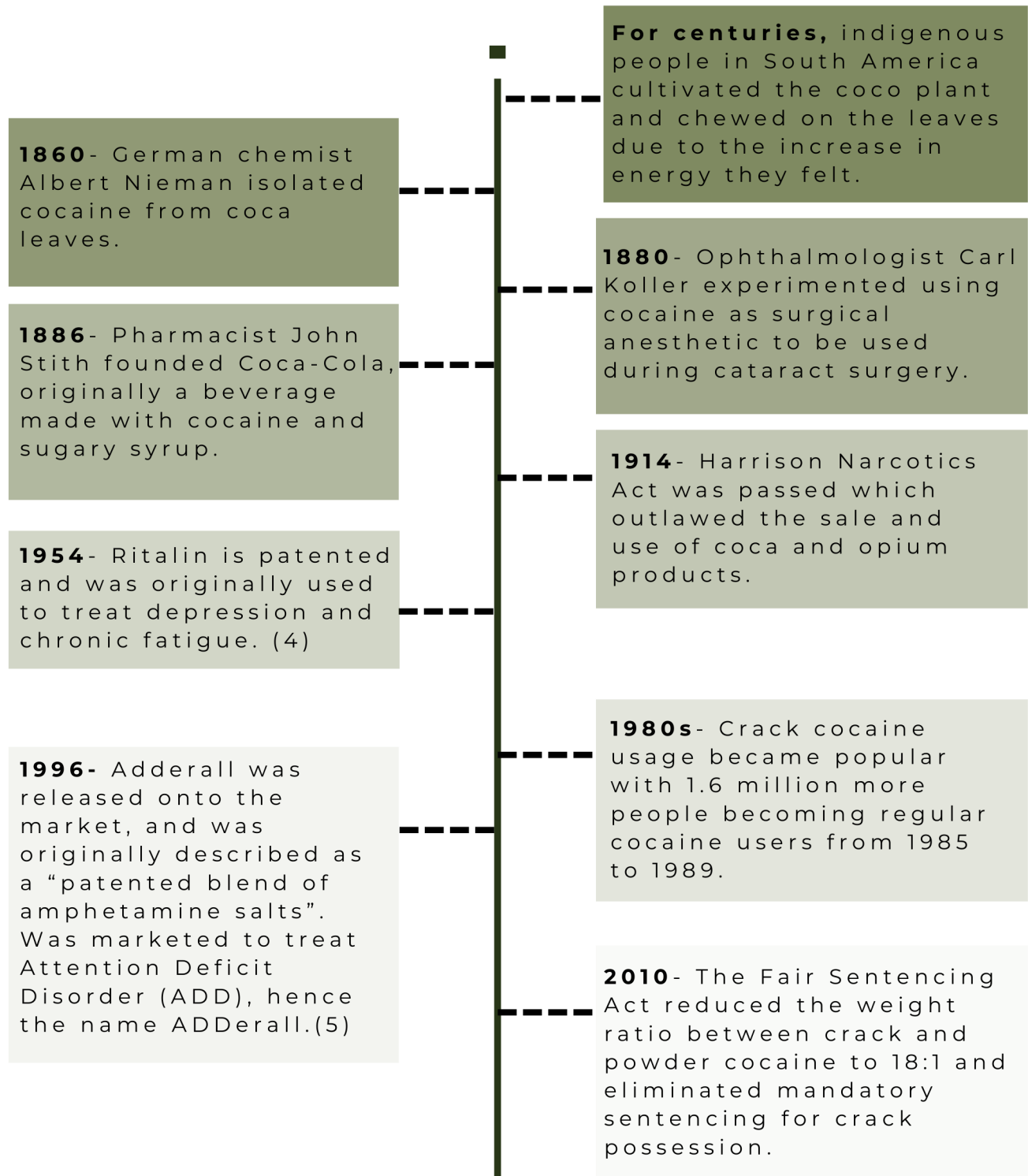
Just because someone is prescribed stimulants though, does not mean they will abuse them or become addicted to them. When taken in small or therapeutic levels, stimulants can make the person feel exhilarated, decrease their appetite, make it easier to pay attention to tasks and increase a person's energy. Because of these side effects, doctors may prescribe medications to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), narcolepsy, or as diet aids.

When taken in large amounts or abused, individuals may feel a rush when first taking the drug, and then the person will experience the same effects as when they are taken in smaller doses, but to a larger degree. For example, instead of increased energy, they will experience extended wakefulness. Chronic use will cause the person to feel agitated, hostile, aggressive, and panicky. Paranoia and hallucinations may also happen. Stimulant overuse could lead to a life-threatening overdose. (2)

This report will explain the data behind stimulant prescribing in Delaware County.

# History of Stimulants

Stimulant drugs have been used throughout history for a variety of purposes. This class of drugs also has a long history through a variety of cultures, and was used for purposes ranging from medicinal to religious. Below is a brief history of stimulant drugs. (3)

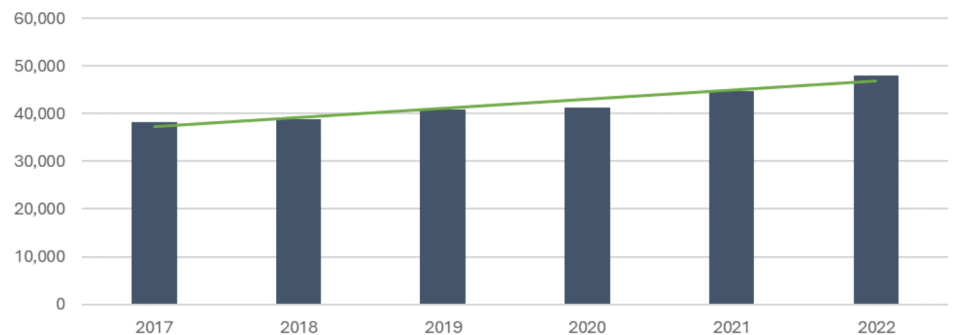


# Delaware County Trends

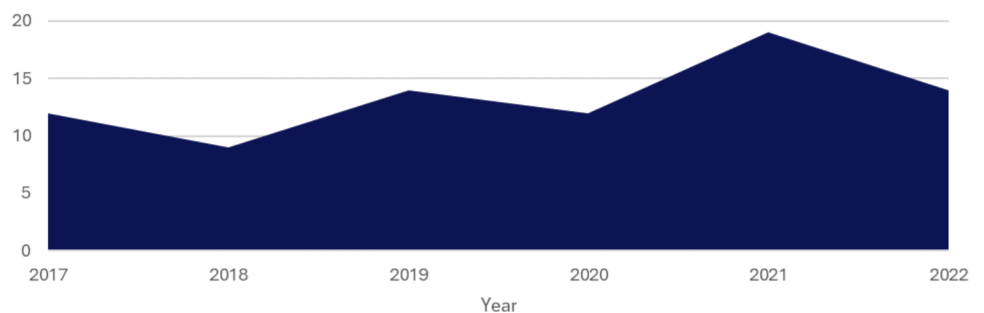
- Since 2017, the rate of stimulant prescriptions has been increasing.(1)
- In the last six years, the rate of stimulant prescriptions increased by almost 10,000 prescriptions per 100,000 people. (1)
- There was the highest prescription rate increase between 2020 and 2021.(1)
- When comparing the number of overdoses in the county, 2021 had the highest number of overdoses involving stimulants.\*
- There is a pattern in the last six years where one year will have an increase in overdoses involving stimulants, then the following year there will be a decrease. Even with this cycle, the peak years continue to get higher over time.\*



Delaware County stimulant prescription rate has continued to climb since 2017.



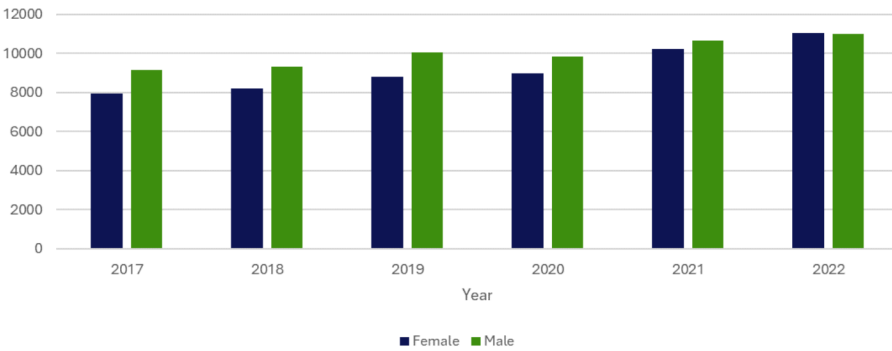
Delaware County overdoses that involved stimulants from 2017 to 2022.



*\*These data were provided by the Ohio Department of Health. The Department specifically disclaims responsibility for any analyses, interpretations or conclusions.*

# Delaware County Trends

Stimulant prescriptions from 2017 to 2022 between males and females.

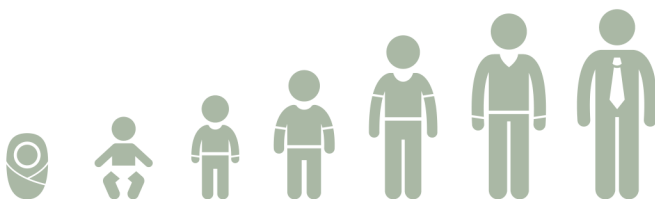
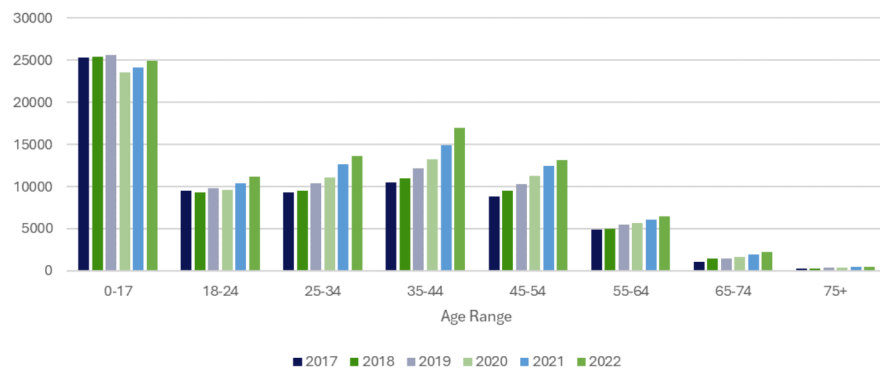


In 2022:



**Were prescribed stimulants  
in Delaware County**

Stimulant prescriptions based on age group.



- From 2017 to 2021, a smaller number of stimulant prescriptions were prescribed to females compared to males.
- 2022 is the first year the number of stimulant prescriptions for females were more than prescriptions for men, with 11,070 prescriptions written for females and 11,000 for males.
- Individuals aged 0-17 are the only age group that have had stable stimulant prescriptions from 2017 to 2022. The one exception is a drop in 2020, but between 2020 to 2022, the number of prescriptions have slowly increased.
- All other age groups have had an increase in stimulant prescriptions with prescriptions for those aged 35-44 increasing by 63%.(1)

# Conclusion

Stimulants are a class of drugs that have been used for centuries for a variety of reasons ranging from indigenous people in South America wanting an extra jolt of energy, to ophthalmologists wanting to provide medical care pain-free to patients that were previously suffering. Today, legal medications in this drug class are used to help people control a variety of conditions so they can live a fulfilled life.(1)

Inappropriate use of these drugs can lead to people seeking illegal stimulants such as cocaine or methamphetamine for a cheaper price compared to their legal counterparts.

High prescription rates of legal stimulants does not necessarily mean that the people they are prescribed to will misuse them or seek illegal stimulants. However, it is important to keep in mind the risk factors of high prescription rates of stimulants when evaluating this information. High prescription rates, without involved medical follow up, can allow people to use medications for extended length of time without a doctor checking in to make sure the medication is still the best fit for patients. Or that patients are using the drug appropriately. This holds true especially considering individuals are being diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) more often, with more awareness of the disorder rising especially in specific populations like women.

It is important to be aware of the risk factors of these medications, and how they might impact the health of the Delaware County community, both positively and negatively.

If you are prescribed these medications it is important to discuss all of the consequences of starting the. And it is important for doctors to keep in mind how many people of starting these medications, and how often they are being prescribed.



# References

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