

Nearly 4,000 Canadians died of opioid overdoses in 2017, a new record

By [Leslie Young](#)

Nearly 4,000 Canadians died from [opioid](#) overdoses in 2017, according to new data released Tuesday by the federal government's special advisory committee on opioid overdoses.

This is an increase of 34 per cent from the year before and in line with [predictions from last winter](#).

Most of these deaths were accidental, and the vast majority involved [fentanyl](#) or fentanyl analogues — 72 per cent. Non-opioid drugs were also involved in about 71 per cent of accidental opioid overdose deaths, according to information from the Public Health Agency of Canada. These are preliminary numbers and might change a little as some deaths are re-examined.

"I am deeply concerned by the opioid crisis in Canada," said Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, in a statement.

"This is unlike any other public health crisis we have experienced in recent years." Canadians are also increasingly being hospitalized due to apparent overdoses, at a rate of 17 people a day, according to data from the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

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By medical reporter [Sophie Scott](#)



PHOTO: [The report found six out of 10 adults were now overweight or obese.](#) (AAP: Dave Hunt)

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Australians are living longer but half of us have a chronic health condition which impacts our quality of life.

Key points:

- One in four Australians have two or more chronic illnesses
- Cancer, mental illness and coronary heart disease are the most common
- Chronic conditions account for 87 per cent of deaths

That is one of the key findings of the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Australia's (AIHW) Health 2018 report. The chair of the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, Professor Sanchia Aranda, said a significant proportion of conditions were caused by high body mass, poor diet and physical inactivity.

"As our Australian population ages, the number of us living with chronic disease is expected to balloon," she said. Read more

[We're living longer but getting sicker](#)

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