Heroin Misuse/Abuse and Consequences

Prevalence

- Heroin use was highest among males and individuals aged 22-23 years.

Injection Drug Use (IDU)

- 74% of all injection drug users inject heroin.

Health Outcomes and Healthcare Utilization

- Heroin-related ED visits increased by 68% among individuals aged 18-34.

- HCV infection rates are high among heroin abusers, especially those who inject.

- Over 1 in 4 women with HIV were infected by IDU.

Treatment

- Heroin use was highest among males and individuals aged 22-23 years.

- 72% of individuals who reported heroin as their drug of choice at treatment admission reported prior SUD treatment episodes.

- 85% of injection drug users have witnessed an overdose.

- 10,171 overdose reversals using naloxone were reported from 1996-2010.

- 1 death could be prevented for every 227 naloxone kits distributed.

- 6% of heroin overdose deaths could be prevented with naloxone distribution.
Heroin Misuse/Abuse and Consequences

Prevalence

- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, which is an ongoing annual population-based survey administered in households, heroin use in the past year in the US was generally higher for males than for females.
- Heroin use in the past year peaked at ages 22-23 for both men and women.
- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, heroin use in the past year in the US was generally higher for males than for females.
- Injection drug use increases the risk of transmitting blood-borne pathogens, including hepatitis C virus (HCV) and HIV, through sharing contaminated syringes and other injection equipment.
- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, heroin use in the past year in the US was generally higher for males than for females.

Injection Drug Use (IDU)

- According to the Los Angeles County Participant Reporting System (LACPRS), the most common injected drug, with nearly 74% of all injection drug users injecting heroin, followed by methamphetamine (11%) and cocaine (2%).
- Among heroin users, 71% prefer to use heroin by injection.
- Injection drug use increases the risk of transmitting blood-borne pathogens, including hepatitis C virus (HCV) and HIV, through sharing contaminated syringes and other injection equipment.
- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, heroin use in the past year in the US was generally higher for males than for females.

Health Outcomes and Healthcare Utilization

- The rate of heroin-related ED visits was highest for white men compared to other race/ethnicity and gender groups in LAC.
- The overall rate of relapse to publicly funded substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs in 2014 increased by 227%.
- The rate of heroin-related ED visits increased by 145% among white men, and increased by 142% among white women from 2005-2013 in LAC.
- Chronic HCV infection rates were higher for those who reported heroin than those who reported other drugs as their primary drug of choice at admission for both injection drug users (36.0% vs. 14.9%) and non-injection drug users (12.0% vs. 2.9%).
- Chronic HCV infection is rare in the general Los Angeles County (LAC) population (1.9%).

Treatment

- In 2014, nearly 72% of individuals who reported heroin as their primary drug of choice at admission to publicly funded treatment programs in LAC reported prior SUD treatment episodes.
- The overall rate of relapse to publicly funded SUD treatment was 56%. The relapse rate for heroin (72%) was higher than that of cocaine (64%), prescription (Rx) drugs (63%), methamphetamine (58%), alcohol (53%), and marijuana (32%).
- According to Coffin et al, 2013, 85% of injection drug users reported ever witnessing an overdose.
- Community-based opioid overdose prevention programs in the US distributed naloxone to 53,032 participants (injection drug users), who reported 10,171 opioid overdose reversals with naloxone during 1996-2010.
- Effective April 2015, California pharmacists can furnish naloxone without a prescription to individuals who use or have a history of using opioids, or who are in contact with such individuals.