

# Suicides by Overdose in South Carolina

South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System, 2017-2021



The South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS) combines data from law enforcement reports, death certificates, and coroner/medical examiner reports (including toxicology) to pool data on violent deaths and their circumstances into one anonymous database. SCVDRS data includes decedents who were fatally injured and died within South Carolina (SC) whether or not they were SC residents. SC residents who were fatally injured or died outside of SC are not included in this report. Therefore, SCVDRS death counts and rates may differ from DPH Vital Statistics and other death sources.

**SCVDRS captures the mechanism utilized to inflict the fatal injury for a suicide. A suicide by overdose occurs when an individual utilizes a drug or poison to intentionally cause a fatal overdose.**

**From 2017-2021...**

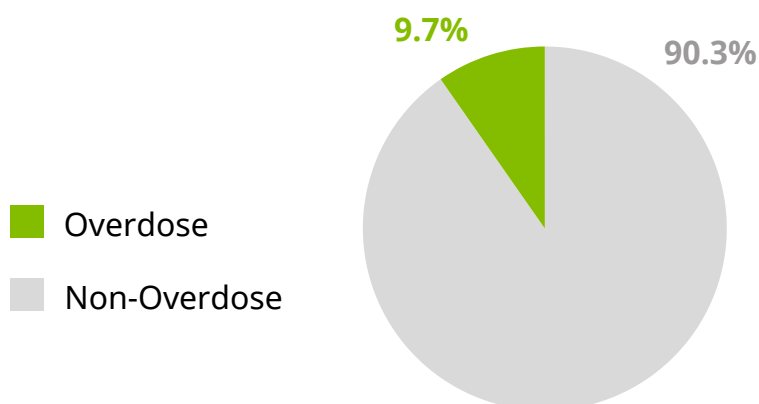
**405**

people died of suicide by overdose in SC from 2017-2021. This represents 9.7% of suicides in SC.

In 2021, there were **82** suicides by overdose in SC. The number of suicides by overdose has remained relatively constant over the past 5 years.

## Suicide in South Carolina, by Overdose

Percent

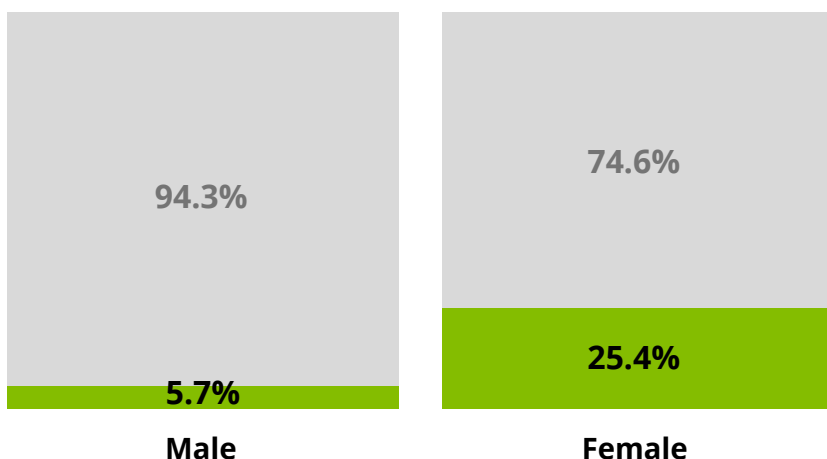


## Demographics of Suicides by Overdose

### Suicides by Overdose and Sex

Percent

Overdose Non-Overdose



Over a quarter of suicides (**25.4%**) among females were by intentional overdose.

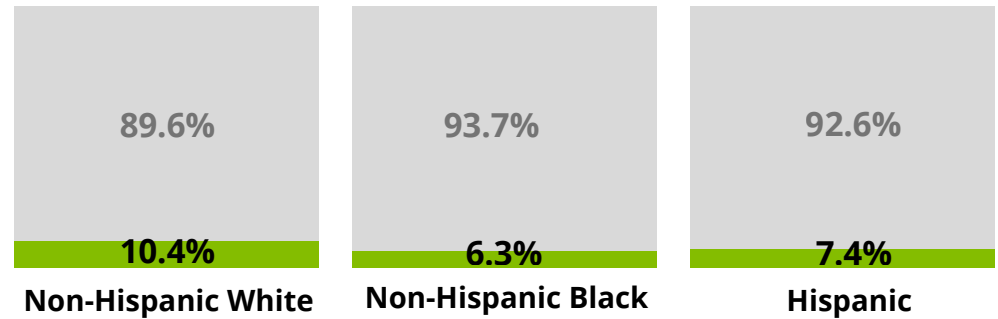
More than half (**53.6%**) of suicides by overdose were among females (data not shown on graph).

## Suicides by Overdose and Race/Ethnicity

Percent

Overdose Non-Overdose

Non-Hispanic White suicide decedents had the highest percent of suicides by overdose (**10.4%**) compared to their non-Hispanic Black (**6.3%**) and Hispanic (**7.4%**) counterparts.

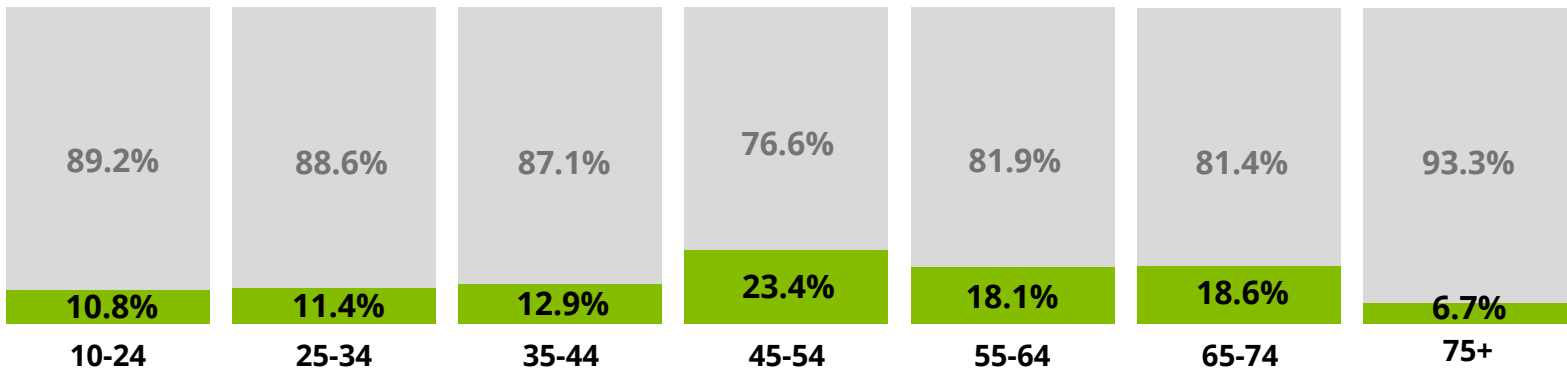


Note: Other racial/ethnic categories not shown due to suppressed values.

## Suicides by Overdose and Age Group

Percent

Overdose Non-Overdose



Note: There were zero suicides by overdose for youths aged <10.

Suicide decedents aged 45-54 had the highest percent of suicides by overdose (**23.4%**), followed by those aged 65-74 (**18.6%**).

## Locations of Suicides by Overdose

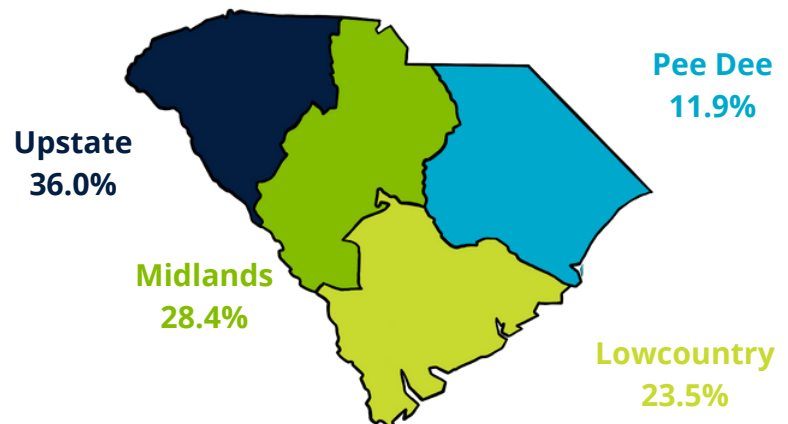
Among all suicides by overdose in SC, 75.1% of decedents were injured in a house or apartment.

More than 1 in 3 (**36.0%**) suicides by overdose occurred in the Upstate Region, while more than 1 in 4 (**28.4%**) suicides by overdose occurred in the Midlands Region.

Over half (**63.7%**) of suicides by overdose in the Upstate region occurred in Greenville and Spartanburg County.

## Suicides by Overdose, by Region

Percent of Regional Suicides



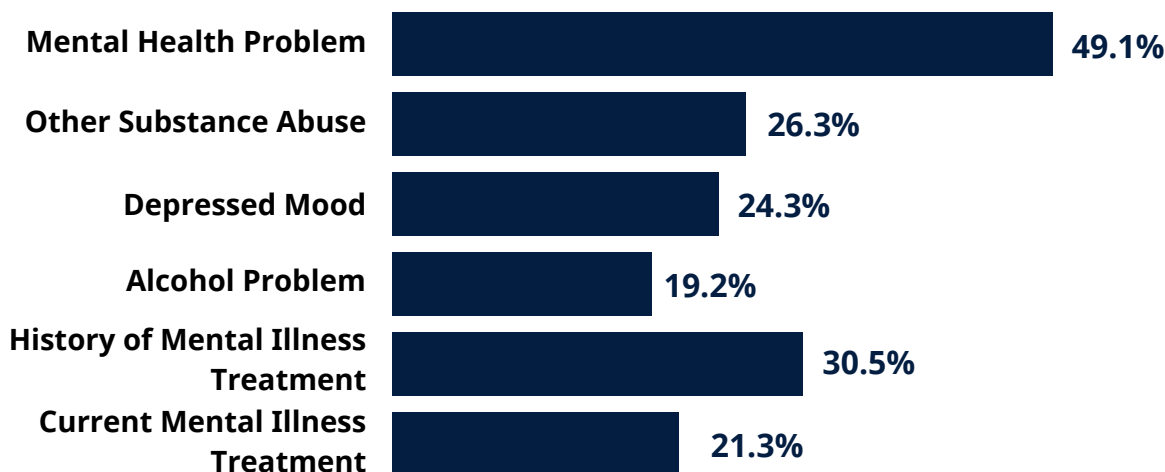
**Greenville County** had the highest percent of suicides by overdose (**15.1%**) among SC counties, followed by **Charleston** (**10.6%**) and **Spartanburg** (**7.9%**).

# Circumstance Characteristics of Suicides by Overdose

Circumstances were known for 83.5% of suicides by overdose. Decedents may have more than one known circumstance. Percents reported are among suicide decedents with at least 1 known circumstance.

## Mental Health Circumstances of Suicides by Overdose

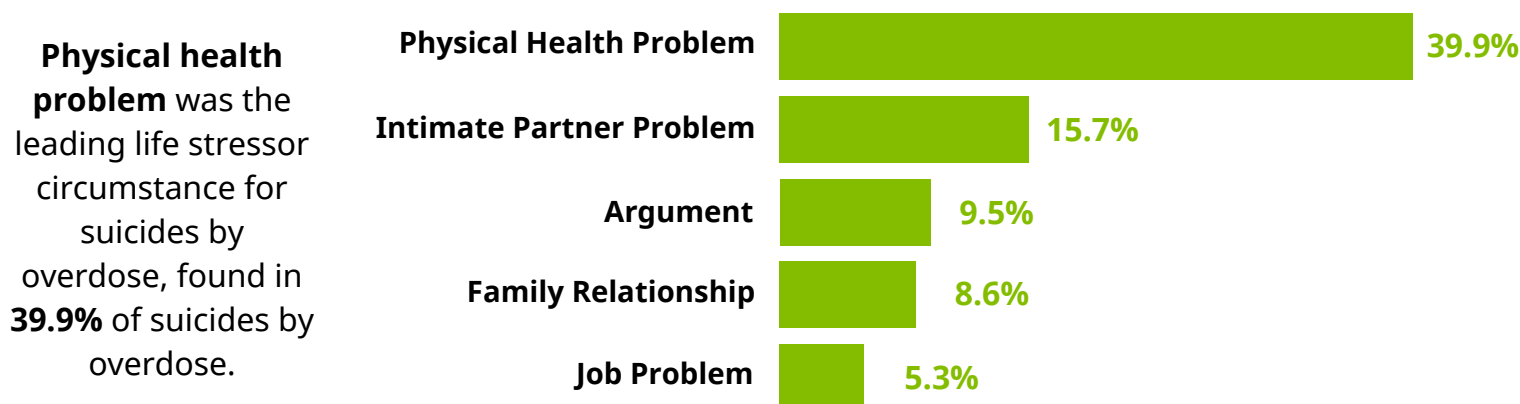
Percent



**Mental health problem** was the most common circumstance in suicides by overdose, found in **49.1%** of suicides by overdose.

## Life Stressor Circumstances of Suicides by Overdose

Percent



**Physical health problem** was the leading life stressor circumstance for suicides by overdose, found in **39.9%** of suicides by overdose.

## SCVDRS Data Limitations

- Data only includes intentional overdoses and overdoses where intent could not be determined. Due to the focus on violent deaths, data regarding unintentional overdose deaths are not available in the SCVDRS dataset.
- Known circumstances leading to the suicide event are subject to the knowledge of family members, friends, and others who report to coroners and law enforcement during investigations.
- Availability of law enforcement and coroner reports for 2020 and 2021 were impacted by the pandemic. Therefore, known circumstances may be underreported.

### Support:

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### Sources:

South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS), 2017-2021