

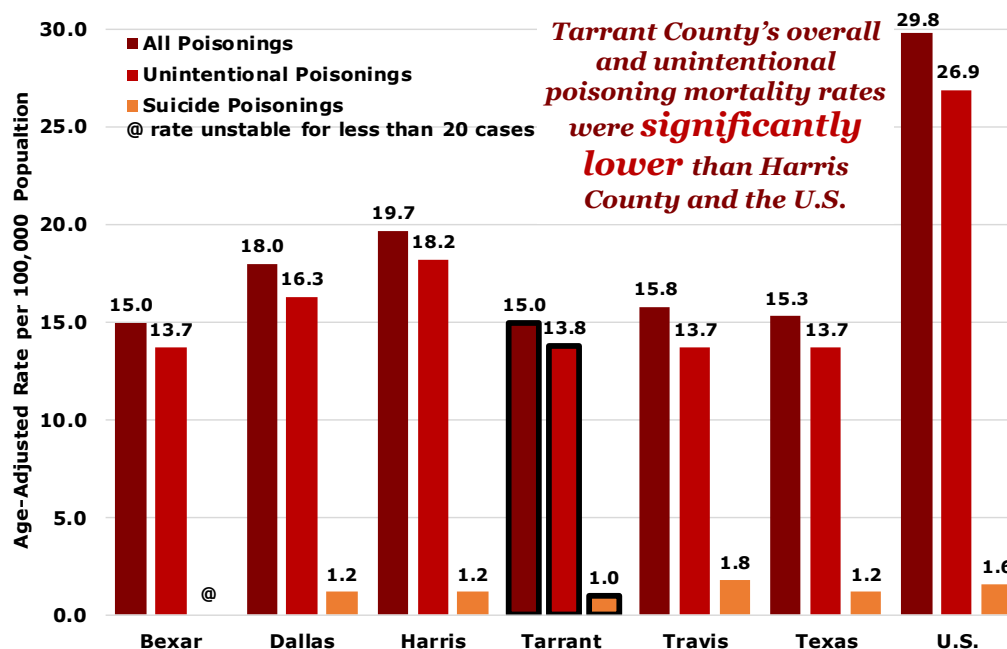
TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA BRIEF



POISONINGS IN TARRANT COUNTY

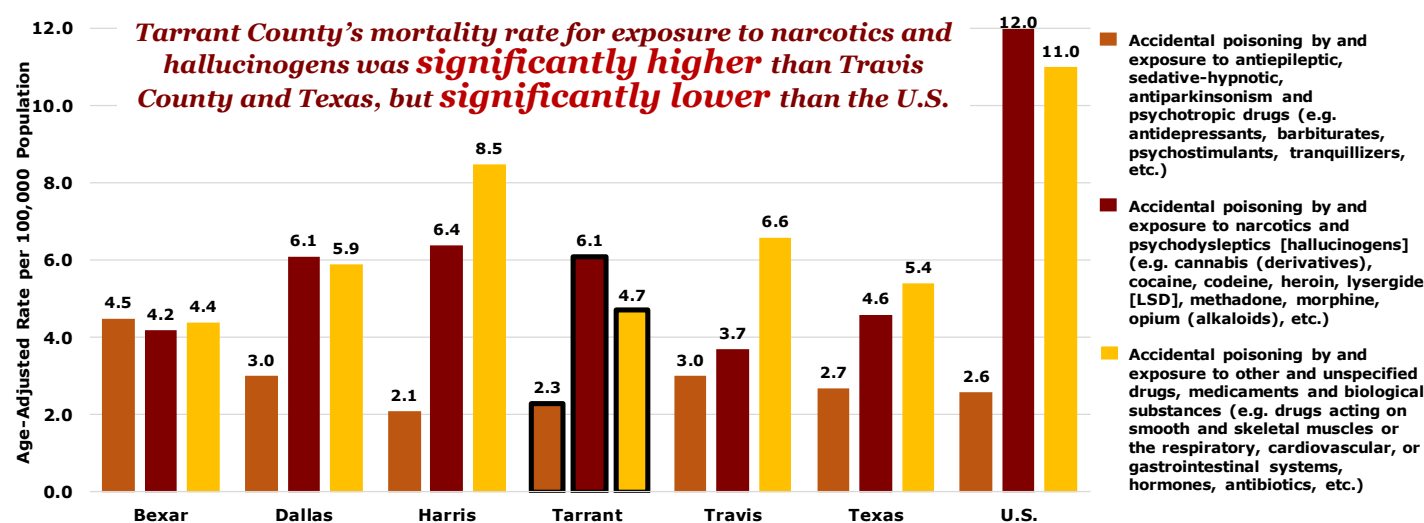
A **poison** can be anything that causes harm when it is used incorrectly, in different amounts, or by the wrong person. Poisons can be *solids* (pills or batteries), *liquids* (laundry detergent or cough syrup), *sprays* (home cleaners or perfume), and *gases* (carbon monoxide or propane). A poison can cause harm through contact with the eyes or skin, and through inhaling or consuming it. Exposures also occur through *bites and stings* (venom from a snake bite) as well as some *plants* (poison ivy). An **overdose** is a type of poisoning and involves over-the-counter, prescription, or illegal drugs. Poisonings (and overdoses) can be intentional (suicide) or unintentional (accident) and result in injuries and death.

Figure 1. Poisoning mortality rates by type and geographical location, 2020



In 2020, poisoning mortality rates among Tarrant County residents were highest for males, non-Hispanic whites, and those aged 45-64 years

Figure 2. Unintentional poisoning mortality rates by top three causes of death and geographical location, 2020



Poisoning mortality rates are derived from the underlying cause of death codes (ICD-10 codes X40-X49, X60-X69, X85-X90, Y10-Y19); Significant differences detected at the 95% confidence level
Data sources: CDC, Poison Help- Health Resources and Services Administration
Data Brief provided by: Division of Epidemiology and Health Information

Figure 3. Top ten exposures reported to the Texas Poison Center Network from Tarrant County residents by substance major category, 2021 (n=13,927)



Exposures reported to the Texas Poison Center Network may involve multiple substances (major categories)

Local Action on Poisoning Prevention



As of September 2022, Tarrant County has **49** year-round medication drop boxes compared to **26** in 2019. There are also **45** fire station boxes that provide envelopes to the public for mailing expired or unwanted medication.

During the 2021 DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Days, participating police departments in Tarrant County collected a total of **12,940** pounds of medication.

Safe Kids North Texas – Fort Worth, led by Cook Children’s, distributed **1,884** medication schedule pads and educated **510** parents/caregivers about poisoning prevention and provided each with medication lock boxes from Oct 2020 - Sept 2021.

Education and Prevention

- Save the Poison Control Hotline number in your phone
 - Poison Prevention Toolkits [poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/resources/toolkits]
 - Purchase medication from official medical providers and pharmacies only
 - Carry Narcan to reverse opioid poisonings [narcan.com]
 - Lock up medications, cleaners, and care products (lockbox, safe, locking cabinet). Store them out of sight and out of reach [upandaway.org]
 - Follow product directions and read warnings. For medications, follow the instructions and talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions
 - Safely dispose of expired, unused, and unwanted medications at official take back locations or events. Do not flush or throw them away
- [aapcc.org/prevention]
 [cdc.gov/medicationsafety/index.html]
 [cookchildrens.org/health-resources/safety/poison-prevention/]

Resources and Services

- Poison Control Hotline
Call **1-800-222-1222** (24/7)
[poisoncontrol.org]
- Poison Control Online Tool
[webpoisoncontrol.org]
- Local Year-Round Medication Drop Boxes [meddropbox.org]
- DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Days
[takebackday.dea.gov]