

Patterns of New Stimulant Use Disorder Diagnoses in BC Before and After COVID-19

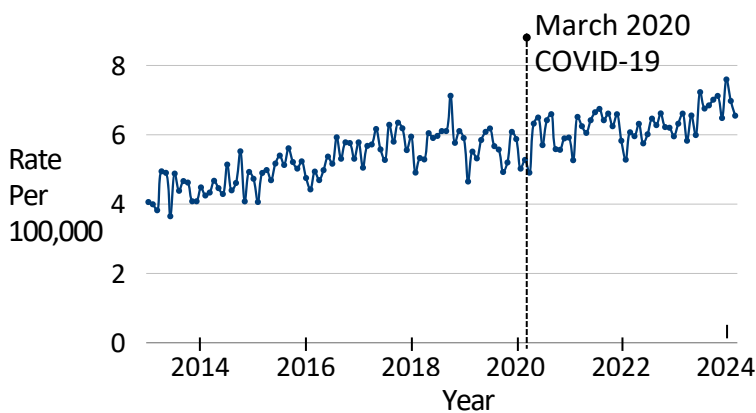
A population-based study from 2013-2024

There have been a growing number of people in British Columbia (BC) who died from drug poisoning and had stimulants in their body. Little is known about how stimulant use has changed at the population level in recent years, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency declaration that disrupted both health services and the drug supply.

This study examines the trends in new stimulant use disorder (StUD) diagnoses and the health profiles of people diagnosed before and after COVID-19 to better understand their needs and risks.

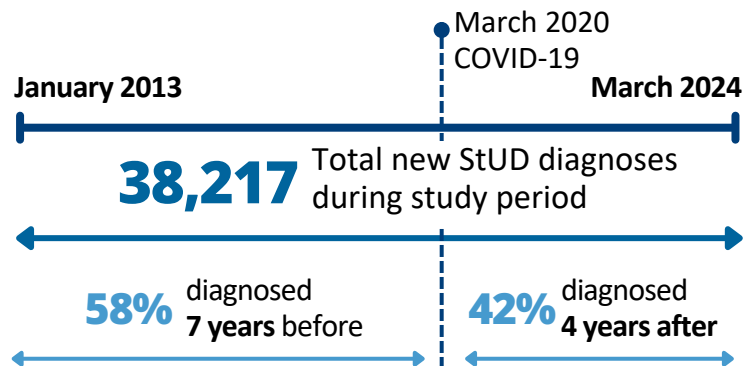
Key Findings

StUDs diagnoses have been slowly on the rise in BC before COVID-19






Diagnoses stabilized after COVID-19, even though drug poisoning deaths with stimulants increased.

The number of StUD diagnoses did not significantly change after COVID-19



Males and adults aged 25 - 54 were most diagnosed with an StUD


MOST DIAGNOSED

Males	Before		66%
	After		67%
Adults 25 - 54 years	Before		70%
	After		74%





LEAST DIAGNOSED

Youth 12 - 24 years	Before		19%
	After		13%

Diagnoses stayed stable for males but decreased among youth after COVID-19.

 Males were **2x** more likely to get a new diagnosis than females.

More people with StUDs saw physicians after COVID-19 for ADHD, heart, kidney diseases

	ADHD	Before After	7.3% 10.2%	↑ 2.9%
	Heart Failure	Before After	2.5% 3.3%	↑ 0.8%
	Hypertension	Before After	9.1% 10%	↑ 0.9%
	Kidney Disease	Before After	4.2% 5.5%	↑ 1.3%

Physician visits for all other mental health and chronic conditions were lower after COVID-19.

Takeaways

- More awareness about stimulant use is needed in the health system and general public.
- More diagnosis and treatment services for people with StUDs are needed.
- Access to more data is needed, like health records, surveys, and community services, to better understand who is at risk and who needs services for stimulant use and StUDs.