



EPI-GRAM: Special Edition

Sarasota County Health Department
Health and Human Services

Inside this issue:
Prescription Drug Misuse



Website:

www.sarasotahealth.org

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To report a disease, or disease outbreak, phone, mail or fax* the appropriate office (Please mark confidential)

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2658

Sarasota, FL 34230-2658

(941) 861-2873 M-F, 8am-5pm

Fax: (941) 861-2902

After Hours: 941-861-2900

To learn more about Sarasota County prescription drug misuse efforts visit

www.scgov.net/drugfreesarasota

Or contact:

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Please share this issue of the Epi-Gram with your staff and colleagues.

Contact Marissa DeVita with any comments or suggestions at

(941) 861-2873,

by e-mail at

Marissa_DeVita@doh.state.fl.us

or by mail to the address listed above.

If you would like the Epi-Gram or other disease control information e-mailed or faxed to you,

please contact us.

The Epidemic of Prescription Drug Misuse We Need Your Help!

Brooke Baker, MS, EdD, Behavioral Health Planning Coordinator

Scott Pritchard, MPH, County Epidemiologist

Sarasota County and neighboring communities are facing an epidemic. Prescription drug misuse has infiltrated our cities, neighborhoods, and families. It is up to us, as a community, to begin to address this issue and help save lives. The community needs your help!

Bill Little, Health Department Administrator

Here are the facts...

- Sarasota County ranks **6th in the state** for unintentional poisoning deaths.
- Prescription drugs accounted for 86% of the drugs identified as a cause of death by the District 12 Medical Examiner in 2009.
- In Sarasota County, unintentional poisonings are the **leading cause of death in 15-34 year olds.**
- In Sarasota County, The unintentional poisoning death rate among those 20-24 years is **4 times greater than the state rate**, see figure 1.
- Sarasota's addictions receiving facility, at First Step of Sarasota, shows a 90% increase in patients admitted for prescription drugs from 2006 to 2009.

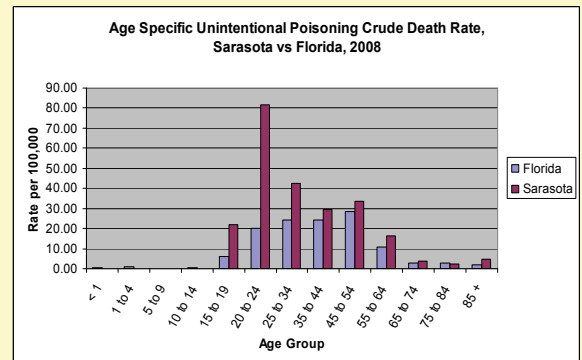


Figure 1. Death rates by age group identify those 20-24 years old as most at risk for unintentional poisoning death in Sarasota County.

Did you know?

Since 2009, the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office has collected nearly **500 pounds** of unused and expired medications at community take back events.

Q & A

Where do individuals report getting prescription drugs from, besides their doctor?

Answer: Friends and Family

- For 2009, the Department of Children and Families' substance abuse referral data indicated Oxycodone comprised 67% of the referrals in Sarasota County.
- In the last year, the Department of Children and Families identified drugs as the primary reason for needing to shelter children in Sarasota County, with 60% of removals due to prescription drug abuse in the family.
- In the last two years at Sarasota Memorial Hospital, newborn babies going through withdrawal from narcotics has increased from less than 2% to over 10%.

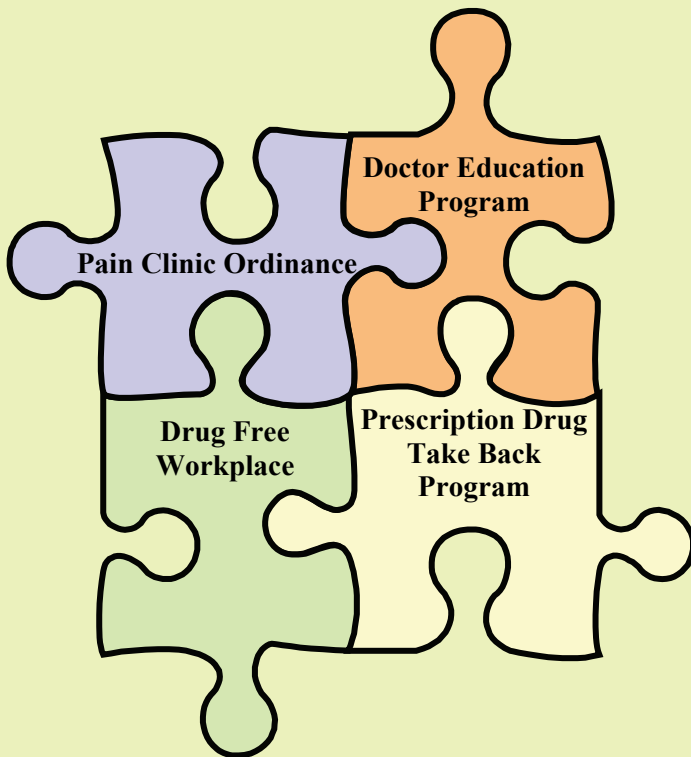


Sarasota Takes On Prescriptions



Here is what we are doing...

Sarasota County has developed a **Community Action Plan** to tackle prescription drug misuse which includes the following 4 components:



Pain Clinic Ordinance: Sarasota County enacted a one year Moratorium on the establishment of new pain clinics.

Doctor Education Program: We are educating medical professionals on prescription drug misuse and encouraging registration for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Database.

Prescription Drug Take Back Program: We have established permanent prescription drug drop off sites and have added more take back days throughout the year.

Drug Free Workplace: We are encouraging community businesses to participate in Drug Free Workplace program to educate work force on dangers of prescription drug misuse.

Here is how you can help...

- ☑ Ask your doctor about the medications you are on and what interactions or side effects may occur.
- ☑ Make sure all your doctors know all of the medications you are on to ensure appropriate treatment planning.
- ☑ Lock up your medicine cabinets. Keep all necessary medications in a safe location away from children and youth.
- ☑ Dispose of unused and expired medications safely! It is unsafe to flush medicine down the toilet or sink. Residents can dispose of non-controlled medications safely at *Sarasota County Waste Management Centers* and controlled medications at the *Sarasota County Sheriff's Office* permanent pharmaceutical disposal box.
- ☑ Encourage friends and family to participate in Drug Free Workplace programs to promote substance free environments throughout the community.

For local treatment resources and for more information, go to

www.scgov.net/drugfreesarasota

Remember, you can always dial 211 for additional questions you or your family members may have regarding accessing the Health and Human Services system.

