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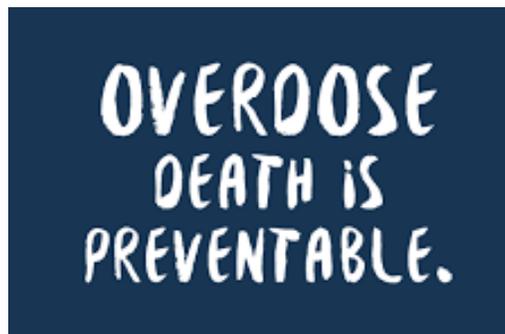


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INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY, AUGUST 31
Prevention and Remembrance



Montgomery, Ala. – Of the more than 72,000 preventable drug overdose deaths in the country in 2017, more than 47,000 involving opioids. In Alabama, 835 preventable drug overdoses deaths occurred in 2017, with 419 involving opioids¹. International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) is a global event held Aug. 31 each year to remember those gone too soon from overdose deaths.

The event aims to raise awareness that overdose death is preventable and to reduce the stigma associated with drug-related death. Goals also include providing information about risk for overdose and community services and preventing drug-related harm through evidence-based policy and practice.

“For many Alabamians, this day brings sadness as we remember our loved ones gone too soon. But it is also a chance, a day for hope, to rejoice in the tens of thousands of lives around the country that have been saved from overdose. Today is a call to action to end the overdose crisis,” said Commissioner Lynn Beshear, ADMH.

The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) encourages all citizens and its providers to participate in this day of prevention education and remembrance of those lost to drug-related deaths.

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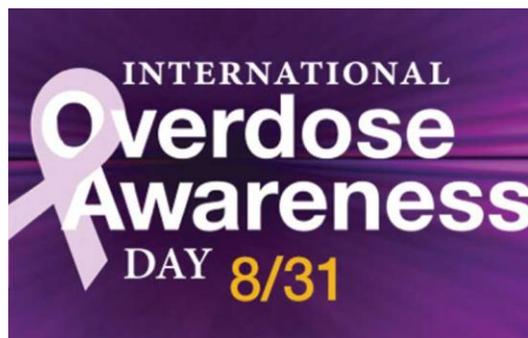
What can you do for yourself or for loved ones?

- [Know what medicines you are taking – Ask!](#)
- Never mix your medications
- [Find the nearest substance use disorder treatment center](#)
- [Attend peer group meetings](#)
- [Recognize the signs of an overdose](#)
- Dispose properly of expired or unwanted medications
- Safely store medications
- Be clear with your physician about past substance use
- Talk to young adults and children about the risks of opioids and other painkillers

What can you do to honor this day?

- Encourage your workplace to participate in IOAD observance activities
- Hold a candlelight vigil or a display of empty hats or shoes to represent the number of lives lost in the community
- Offer an educational program, such as one related to preventing opioid use, in partnership with a local organization
- Provide a safe space for telling the stories of overdose victims
- Add the name of a loved one who died of an opioid overdose to the [Celebrating Lost Loved Ones map](#)
- Purchase or create purple wristbands, pins, shirts or other items and wear them on Aug. 31
- Research state and federal legislation that addresses opioid overdose prevention, and write to your representative

To learn more about substance use disorder prevention and treatment at the Alabama Department of Mental Health and its providers, please call 334-242-3962 and visit <https://mh.alabama.gov/prevention/> and <https://mh.alabama.gov/substance-abuse-treatment-services/>.



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