

# EXCESS MORTALITY BURDEN AMONG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS IN VANCOUVER, CANADA, 1996-2011

## What was our study about?

The study examined potential differences in mortality between males and females who inject drugs.

Between 1996 and 2011, we followed 2,317 people who inject drugs (PWID) in Vancouver, Canada with semi-annual interviews and obtained mortality data from the provincial Vital Statistics database.

## What did we do?

Every year, an average of 3 in 100 PWID died during follow-up, with a total of 483 (21%) participants deceased, most commonly for HIV-related causes and overdose.



**Compared to men, women who inject drugs were at higher risk of HIV-related mortality and bore a more than doubled excess mortality burden.**

Mortality rate for male PWID was 7 times and for female PWID 16 times higher than general British Columbians.

## What we found?

During follow-up, HIV mortality rate significantly declined among male PWID but remained stable among female PWID.

Enrollment in addiction treatment was protective against mortality only among men.

## What's next?

Improved harm reduction services are necessary for all PWID, while more women-friendly services are urgently needed to address exceptionally high mortality among female PWID.

Hayashi, K., Dong, H., Marshall, B. D., Milloy, M. J., Montaner, J. S., Wood, E., & Kerr, T. (2016). Sex-Based Differences in Rates, Causes, and Predictors of Death Among Injection Drug Users in Vancouver, Canada. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 183(6), 544-552.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26865265/>

