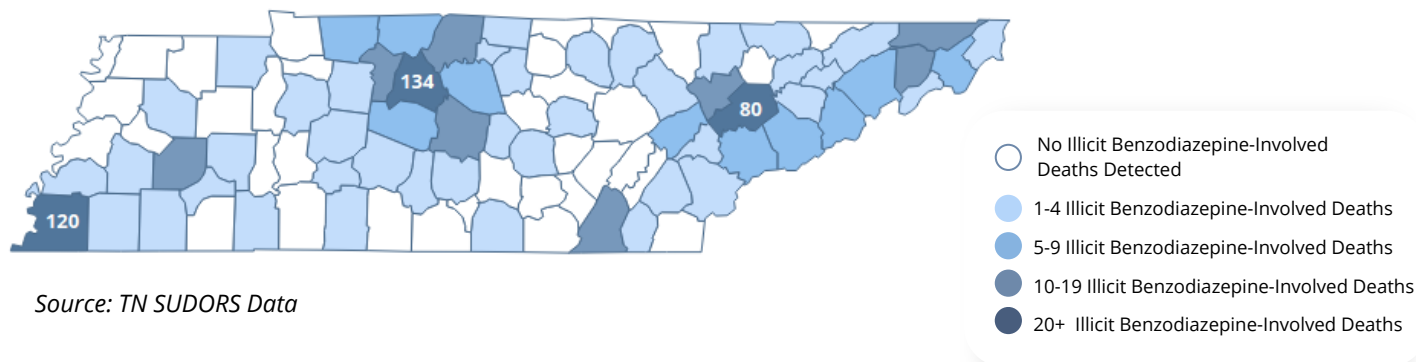


# Emerging Trends Brief: Illicit Benzodiazepines in Tennessee

Illicit or “designer” benzodiazepines, a class of illegally manufactured benzodiazepines, have been linked to overdose deaths nationwide and in Tennessee (TN). In 2023, TDH published an [article](#) comparing the impact of this emerging drug class and prescription benzodiazepines. This brief covers basic trends on illicit benzodiazepine-involved deaths of TN residents captured by the [TN State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System \(SUDORS\)](#).

## Illicit Benzodiazepine-Involved Deaths in Tennessee by County, 2019-2023

Below are the number of illicit benzodiazepine-involved overdose deaths for Tennessee residents by their county of residence



### Bromazolam emerged as the dominant illicit benzodiazepine in 2023

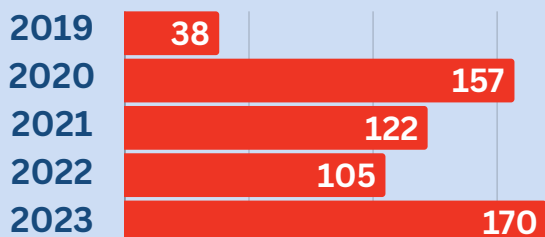
Bromazolam represented 90% of illicit benzodiazepine-involved deaths in 2023, compared to 40% in 2022.

### Opioids and benzodiazepines taken together can increase overdose risk



Taking both an opioid and a benzodiazepine together can slow your breathing too much. This can cause an overdose and possibly death.

## TN Residents with Illicit Benzodiazepine-Involved Deaths



## 2023 Top Substances also identified in Toxicology with Illicit Benzodiazepines:

- 1 Fentanyl
- 2 Methamphetamine
- 3 Cocaine

96% of illicit benzodiazepine-involved deaths also involved an opioid