

# Emergency Department Visits for Violence Among Women of Reproductive Age

## What is ESSENCE?

ESSENCE stands for Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics. It collects data in near real-time from emergency departments (ED) across the state. We use syndromes (collections of symptoms) in ESSENCE to search chief complaint and discharge diagnosis data in order to detect and monitor diseases and conditions. This means of monitoring trends and identifying emerging issues is called syndromic surveillance.

## Purpose of this Report:

The objective of this report is to monitor trends in ED visits for violence among women of reproductive age. It is one of several means of surveillance of risk factors for homicide and suicide deaths among pregnant and postpartum women in Tennessee (TN).

## Notes and Limitations:

All syndromic definitions were developed by CDC. Because perpetrator information is not often included in ED visit data, IPV-related ED visits may be under-estimated. Syndromic surveillance only captures individuals who seek medical care for a condition or injury, and thus only represents a portion of all individuals experiencing these conditions. For this reason, ESSENCE is just one tool in our toolbox to understand these public health issues and to identify opportunities for prevention and intervention.

## For more information:

- [Prevention of Violent Maternal Deaths in TN](#)
- [Maternal Health Innovation in TN](#)
- [Maternal Mortality Review in TN](#)

## Report Contents:

[Intimate Partner Violence](#)

[Sexual Violence](#)

[Suicide Ideation/Attempt](#)

[Firearm Injury](#)

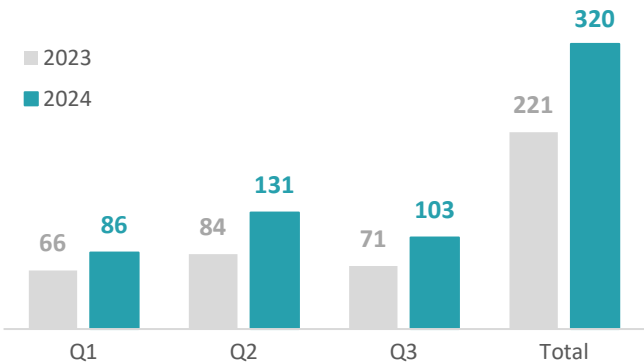


ESSENCE Report: ED Visits for Violence Among Women of Reproductive Age (15-44)

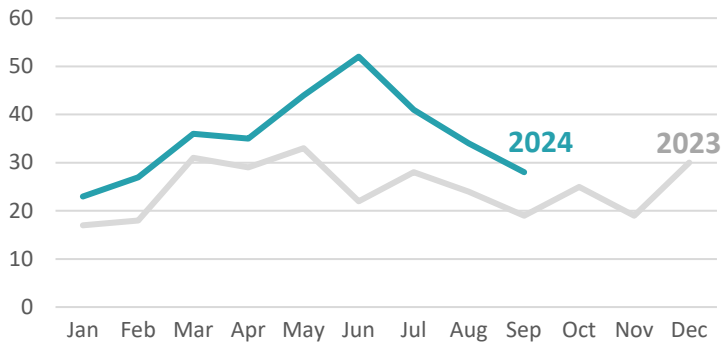
# Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

July – September 2024 (Q3)

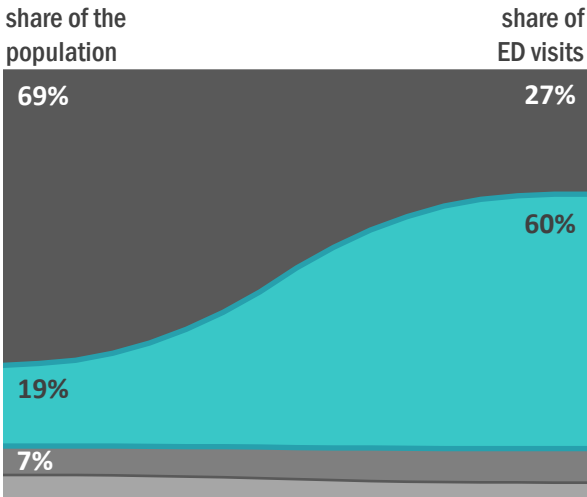
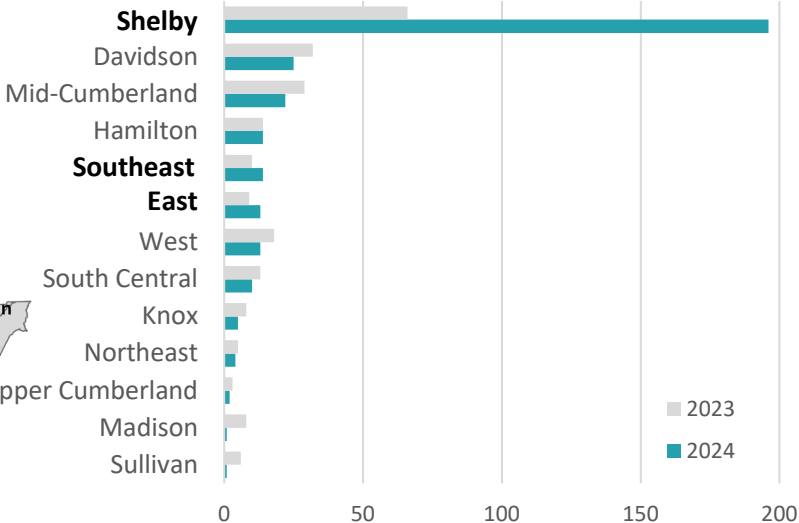
The count of IPV-related ED visits is **45% higher** in Q3 2024 compared to Q3 2023.



Monthly counts of IPV-related ED visits in 2024 show a steady decline from the peak in June through September.



The number of IPV-related ED visits in Q1-Q3 2024 is **197% higher** in **Shelby** compared to the same period last year. Although its counts remain lower, the **East** and the **Southeast** regions have also experienced a rise, increasing **44% and 40%** respectively, compared to 2023.



During Q1-Q3 2024, **Non-Hispanic Black females continue to be overrepresented** in IPV-related ED visits, accounting for 60% of visits while representing just 19% of the population.

When examining IPV-related ED visits by age (data not shown), females aged 20-34 account for 68% of visits while accounting for just 52% of the population of women of reproductive age.

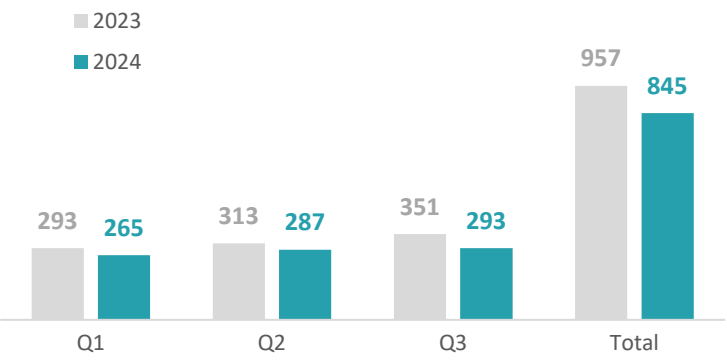
IPV is abuse or aggression in a romantic relationship. “Intimate partner” refers to both current and former spouses and dating partners. Types of IPV include physical and sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression. IPV can range in frequency and severity and even one episode can have a lasting impact.

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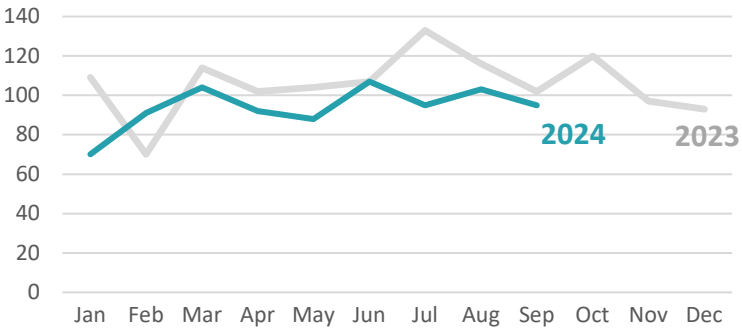
# Sexual Violence (SV)

July – September 2024 (Q3)

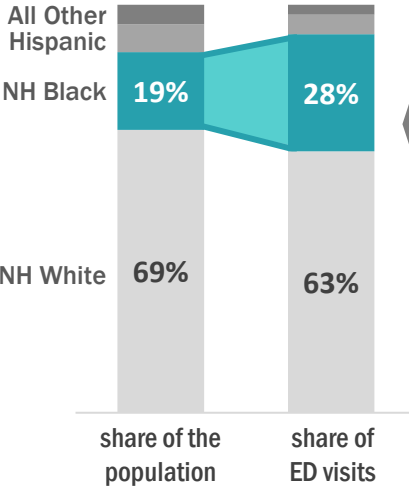
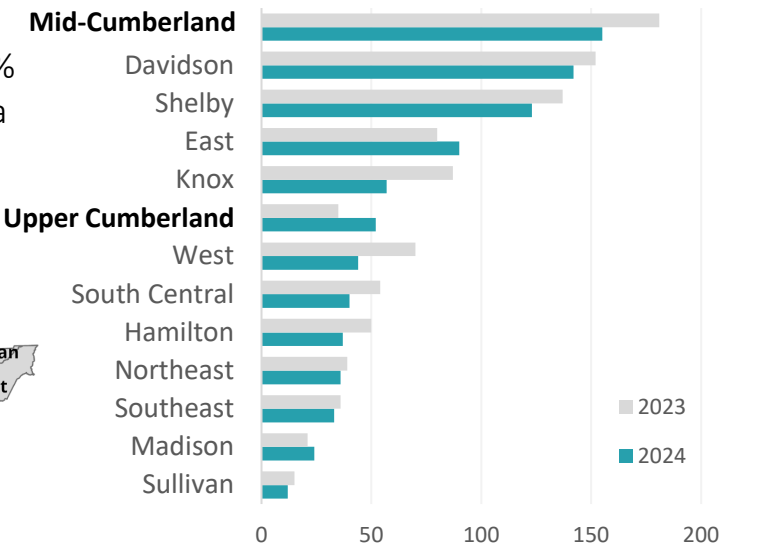
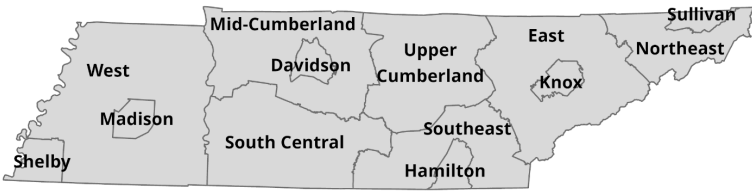
The count of SV-related ED visits is **17% lower** in Q3 2024 compared to Q3 2023.



Although monthly counts of SV-related ED visits varied throughout 2024, visits started declining in August and continued downward in September.

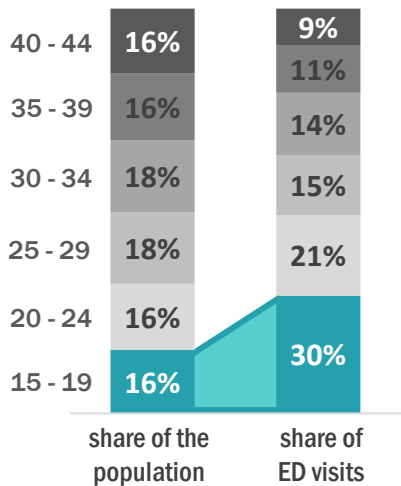


While state-wide SV-related ED visits are 17% lower in Q3 2024 compared to Q3 2023, and 12% lower for Q1-Q3 overall, increases were seen in a few regions. The largest increases were seen in **Upper Cumberland (49%)**. The **Mid-Cumberland** region continues to have the highest number of SV-related ED visits.



The distribution of SV-related ED visits by race and ethnicity has remained similar in 2024 compared to 2023. **Non-Hispanic Black females continue to be overrepresented**, accounting for 28% of visits while representing just 19% of the population.

The distribution of SV-related ED visits by age has remained similar in 2024 compared to 2023. **Females aged 15-19 are overrepresented**, accounting for 30% of visits while representing just 16% of the population.



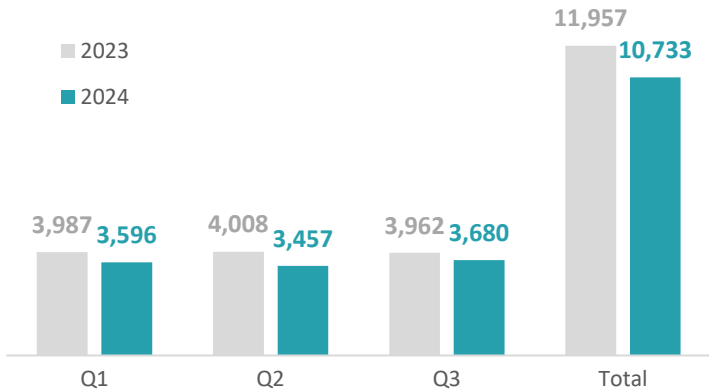
SV is any sexual activity or act in which consent is not obtained or freely given. Types of SV include sexual abuse, coercion, and assault, and rape. SV can occur in person or through technology, such as sharing unsolicited sexual pictures or non-consensual sexting.

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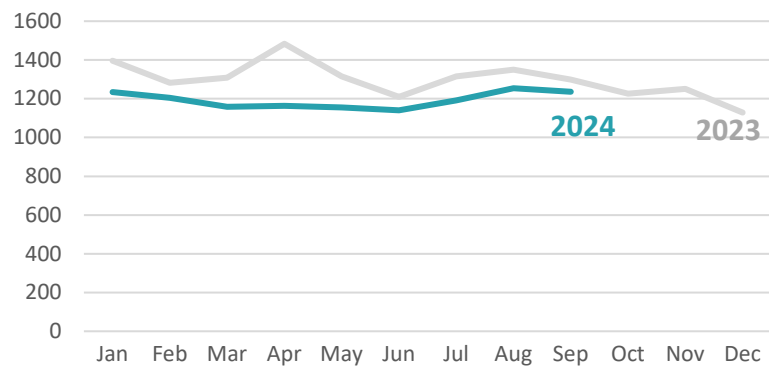
# Suicide Ideation/Attempt (SIA)

July – September 2024 (Q3)

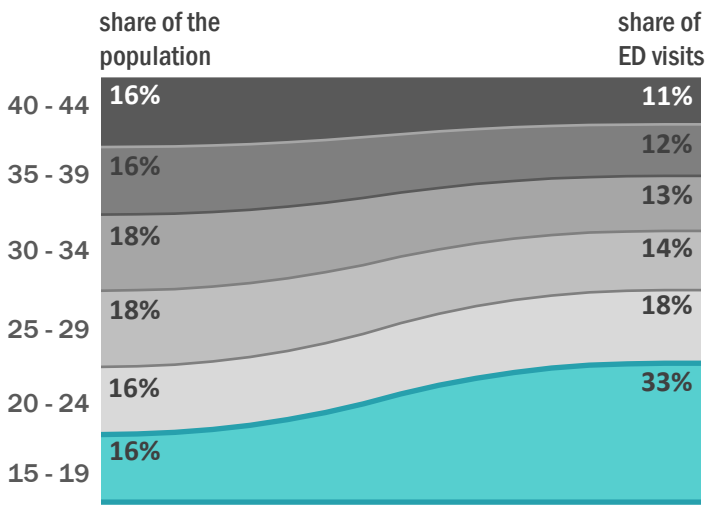
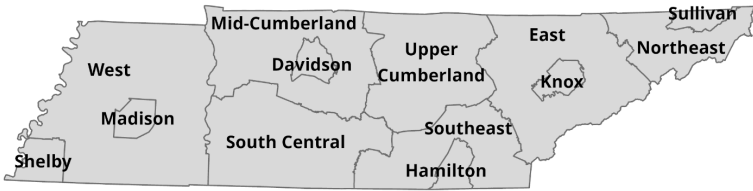
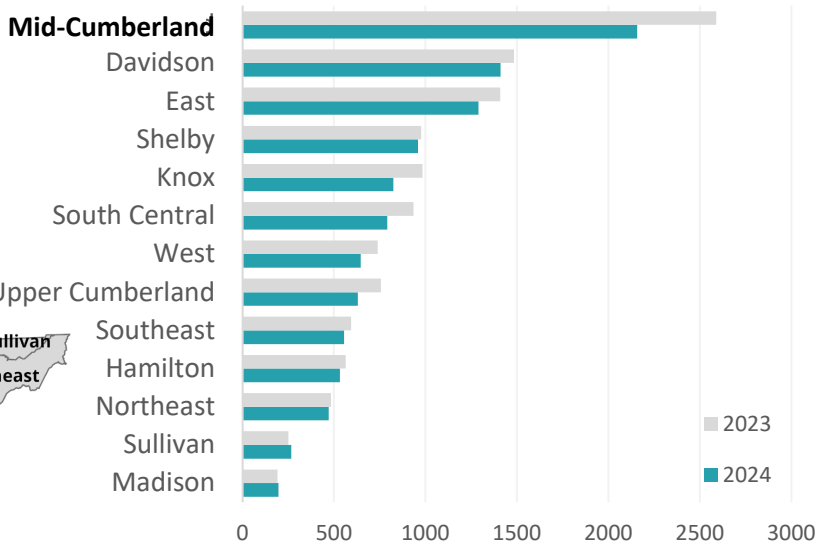
The count of SIA-related ED visits is **7% lower** in Q3 2024 compared to Q3 2023.



Monthly counts of SIA-related ED visits maintained relative stability throughout 2024, with a slight upward trend in August.



Compared to Q1-Q3 2023, counts of SIA-related ED visits are lower in most regions. The **Mid-Cumberland** region continues to have the highest number of SIA-related ED visits, though counts there are 17% lower this year.



The distribution of SIA-related ED visits by age has remained similar in 2024 compared to 2023. Females aged **15-19** are **overrepresented**, accounting for 33% of visits while representing just 16% of the population.

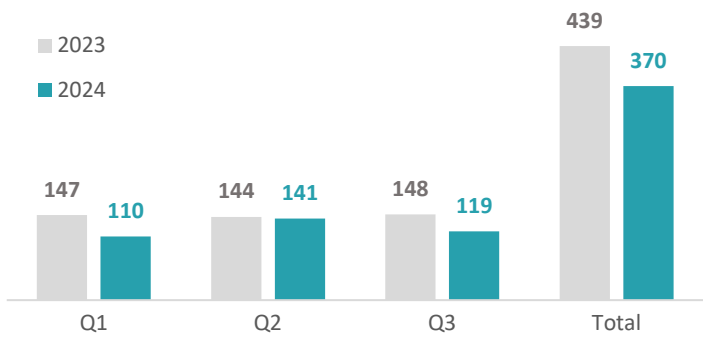
The distribution of SIA-related ED visits by race and ethnicity (data not shown) is similar to the population distribution.

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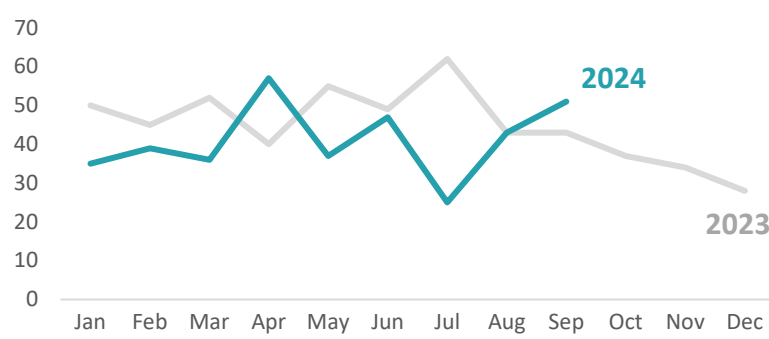
Firearm Injury (FI)

July – September 2024 (Q3)

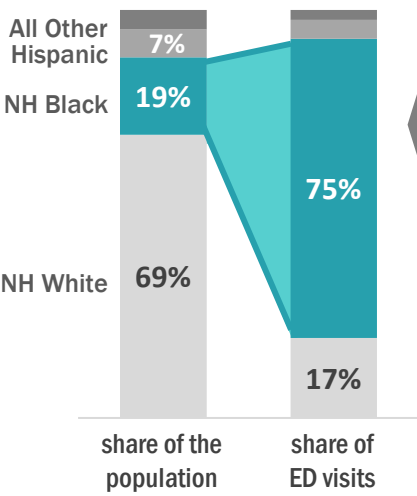
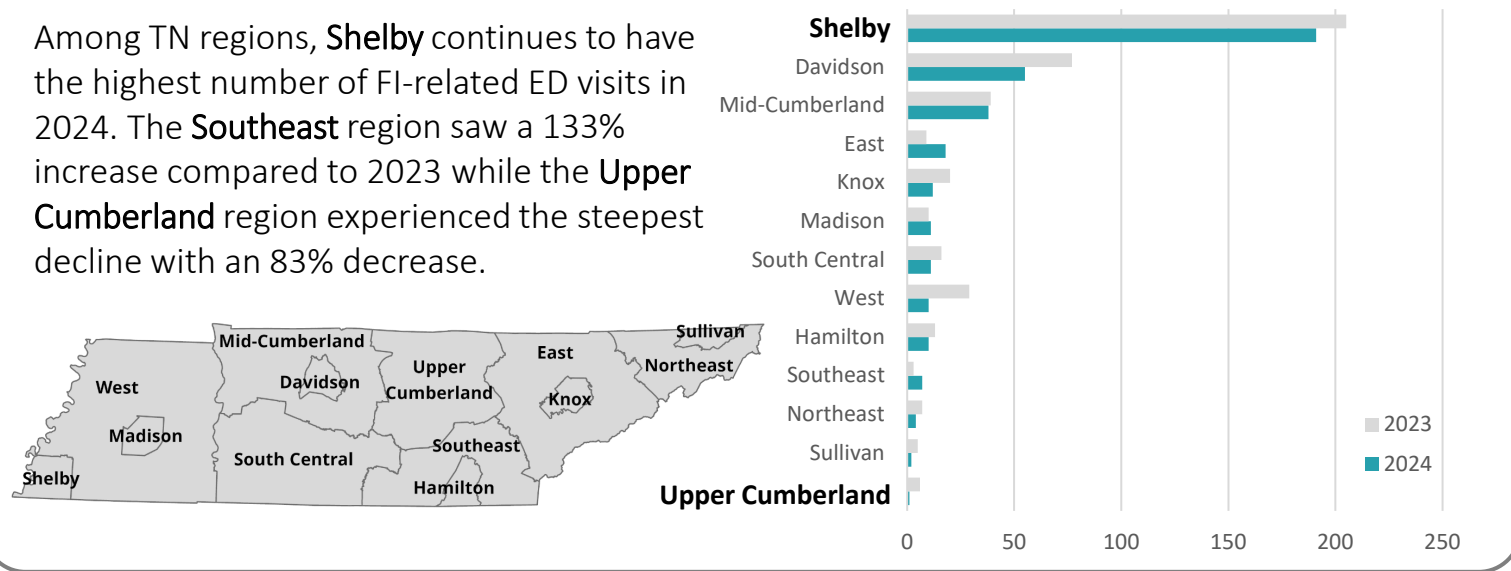
The count of FI-related ED visits in Q3 2024 showed a 20% decrease compared to that of Q3 2023.



Monthly counts of FI-related ED visits have fluctuated in 2024. July saw the lowest count of the year so far, followed by a sharp increase in August and September.

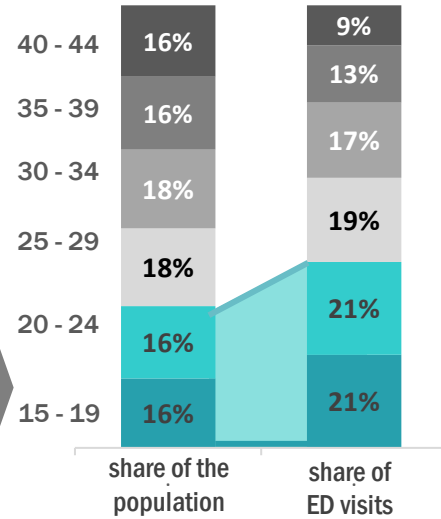


Among TN regions, **Shelby** continues to have the highest number of FI-related ED visits in 2024. The **Southeast** region saw a 133% increase compared to 2023 while the **Upper Cumberland** region experienced the steepest decline with an 83% decrease.



The distribution of FI-related ED visits by race and ethnicity was similar in Q1-Q3 2024 compared to 2023. However, **non-Hispanic Black females continue to be overrepresented**, accounting for 75% of visits while representing just 19% of the population.

The distribution of FI-related ED visits by age was similar in Q1-Q3 2024 compared to 2023. However, females aged **15-24 are overrepresented**, accounting for 42% of visits while representing just 32% of the population.



FI is a wound from a weapon that uses a powder charge to fire a projectile (e.g. handguns and shotguns). FI can be intentional or unintentional. Some circumstances include mishandling, suicide, assault, or during legal intervention.