



**D41 Cocaine Related Deaths in Tarrant County**

*Nannepaga Zachariah, PhD\*, and Nizam Peerwani, MD, Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office, 200 Feliks Gwozdz Place, Fort Worth, TX 76104*

Participants will learn about the distribution of cocaine related deaths as related to the age, gender, race, and socioeconomic status according to the zip codes in various parts of Tarrant County.

The Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office serves a population of over two million Americans and over 8,000 inquests in 2004. A large number of deaths are associated with drug abuse and among them cocaine is most frequently used.

In pre-Columbian times the coca leaf, which is the source of cocaine, was officially reserved for Inca Royalty. The natives used coca for mystical, social, religious, nutritional, and medicinal purposes. In the following years, cocaine was effectively used as a pain killer, as well as a surface anesthetic. In later years, for the pharmaceutical firm ParkeDavis, cocaine was a fast selling product for hay fever and catarrh remedy. In 1886, Coca-Cola was sold as a temperance drink and was very popular and invigorating. Until 1903, a typical serving contained approximately 60 milligrams of cocaine. Today the Coca-Cola Company uses only the coca leaves for flavoring since the drug has been removed.

Cocaine is a powerfully addictive drug. During 2002, there were an estimated 1,059,000 new cocaine users in the United States. The average age of those who first used cocaine during 2002 was 20.3 years. According to the 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 34.9 million Americans age 12 and older had tried cocaine at least once in their lifetimes. This represents 14.7 percent of the population ages 12 and older. About 5.9 million (2.5%) have used cocaine in the past year and 2.3 million (1%) had used cocaine in the past month.

Among the students surveyed in 2004, 3.4 percent of eighth graders, 5.4 percent of tenth graders, and 8.1 percent of twelfth graders reported using cocaine at least once during their lifetimes. Regardless of the ease by which one can obtain cocaine, 19.4 percent of eighth graders, 31.2 percent of tenth graders, and 41.7 percent of twelfth graders reported in 2004 that cocaine was fairly easy to obtain.

The purpose of this study is to establish the role of cocaine use in Tarrant County. The Tarrant County Medical Examiner's cases between the years 2000 and 2004 are tabulated to the following manners of death: natural, accidental, suicide, and homicide. Between the years 2000 and 2004, out of all cases reported to have mixed drug abuse, 376 cases were found to have cocaine.

**Yearly Distributions of Cocaine**

Year	Male	Female	Black	Hispanic	White	Other
2000	22	11	13	2	18	0
	0-19	20-39	40-69	70+		
	0	22	11	0		
2001	32	10	11	4	27	0
	0-19	20-39	40-69	70+		
	2	20	20	0		
2002	32	6	8	5	24	1
	0-19	20-39	40-69	70+		
	2	19	17	0		
2003	65	16	25	10	45	1
	0-19	20-39	40-69	70+		
	6	34	41	0		
2004	127	55	22	29	130	1
	0-19	20-39	40-69	70+		
	25	61	83	13		
2000-2004 Totals	Male	Female	Black	Hispanic	White	Other
	278	98	79	50	244	3
Totals	0-19	20-39	40-69	70+		
	35	156	172	13		

Cocaine, Socio-Economic Status, Zip Code

**Cocaine, Socio-Economic Status, Zip Code**