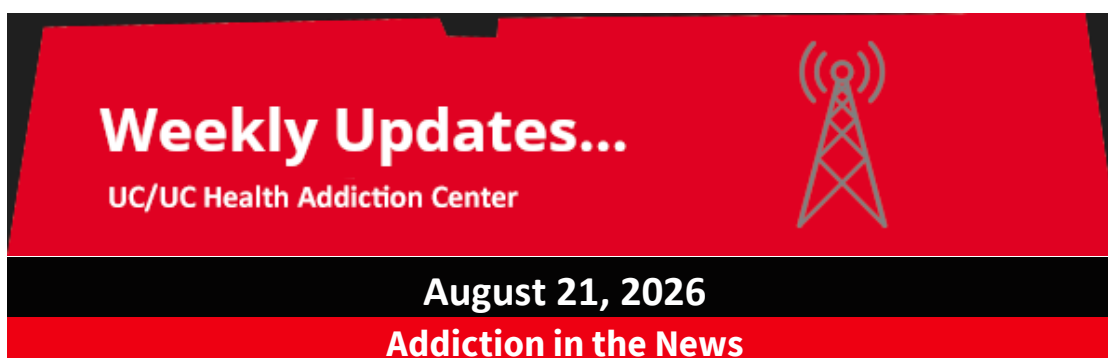


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the University of Cincinnati/UC Health Addiction Center (UCAC)! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from UCAC researchers. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu) to change your communication preferences. Thank you.

Thank you for your interest in the UC/UC Health Addiction Center - our mission is to generate new knowledge through innovative research, disseminate that knowledge through education and training, and provide high-quality, evidence-based treatment for individuals affected by addiction and related conditions. We are committed to supporting lifelong recovery and promoting dignity and respect for all individuals on their recovery journey.



UC/ Regional News

OVERDOSE AWARENESS WEEK

When: Monday, August 24 - Friday, August 28 | 10:30am – 1:30pm

Where: University Hospital Cafeteria

Join the UC Early Intervention Program (EIP) on Monday, August 24 - Friday, August 28, from 10:30am – 1:30pm, in the University Hospital Cafeteria for on-site Overdose Awareness Week activities. [See attached event flyer.](#)

Additionally, UC EIP will be participating in the Overdose Awareness Day event on Friday, August 28, from 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM at Washington Park. The event is hosted by Addiction Services Council and the African American Engagement Workgroup.

2026 Annual Overdose Awareness Day Event

Date: Friday, August 28, 2026

Time: 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM (concert immediately following)

Location: Washington Park in Cincinnati

The Addiction Services Council and the African American Engagement Workgroup are proud to host the 2026 Overdose Awareness Day event. This community-wide event is dedicated to remembering those we have lost to overdose, supporting families and loved ones impacted by substance use, and bringing hope, healing, education, and resources to our community. The event will feature inspirational speakers, free picnic food, snow cones, popcorn, family-friendly activities, a petting zoo, pony rides, bounce houses, wellness resources, and counselors available on

site for anyone seeking support. Everything is provided at no cost to attendees and their families. Everyone is welcome!

National News

Quitting alcohol changes the brain and can increase the risk of compulsive drinking—new research in mice

For some, abstaining from alcohol can subsequently increase compulsive drinking. Our research team found that, in abstaining mice, this urge to drink is preceded by changes in the activity of a particular brain region, pointing to potential new screening opportunities to identify and help those most vulnerable to relapse. Our research is published in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*. Although alcohol abstinence is associated with improved health outcomes, addiction researchers have theorized that brain changes that occur during abstinence may increase a person's risk of relapse. To explore this theory, we studied...

Cannabis Use Disorder Rising Among Adults

The prevalence of cannabis use disorder (CUD) increased in adults from 2021 to 2024, while the prevalence of alcohol use disorder (AUD) remained stable, a cross-sectional study showed. Among over 180,000 participants, past-year CUD prevalence increased among men (7.3% to 9.3%, $P < 0.001$) and women (4.5% to 5.6%, $P = 0.01$), reported Nora D. Volkow, MD, of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and co-authors. Of note, moderate-to-severe CUD prevalence also increased among men (3.1% to 4.1%, $P < 0.001$), especially among those ages 35-49 and those ages 50 and older, and women (1.7% to 2.5%, $P < 0.001$), especially...

Researchers Try to Tie Cannabis to Irregular Heartbeats, Opposite Turns Out True

Defying expectations, regular cannabis users had fewer ectopic heartbeats on the days they reached for the joint or vape, a randomized crossover trial showed. On days using cannabis, there was a significant 9% reduction in these extra or early heartbeats (median 13 per day on cannabis vs 13.8 per day off cannabis; rate ratio [RR] 0.91, 95% CI 0.85-0.98) among habitual cannabis smokers and vapers who had no history of clinically diagnosed cardiac arrhythmias. While each cannabis inhalation was associated with a 2% reduction in ectopic beats (RR 0.98, 95% CI 0.97-0.99), Gregory Marcus, MD, MAS, of the University of California San Francisco...

US teens are smoking and vaping less than their peers abroad

Smoking and vaping continued to decline among middle school and high school students in 2025, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's 2025 National Youth Tobacco Survey, released in July 2026. This annual, school-based survey has been tracking smoking and other nicotine product use among American youth ages 11 to 18 since 1999. Perhaps most excitingly, the survey found that smoking—the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the U.S. and

worldwide—is at a historic low among U.S. youth, at just 1.4%. By contrast, in 1997—when smoking rates among U.S. youth were the highest ever...

Experimental pill targets nerve pain pathway, cutting opioid use after abdominal surgery

Opioids can be highly effective at relieving moderate to severe pain, whether it comes from surgery, an injury or conditions such as cancer. They work by activating opioid receptors in the brain and body, which block pain signals and reduce the feeling of pain. These benefits also come with a serious downside. Opioid misuse and abuse have become a major public health problem worldwide. Pain requires medication, but vulnerable populations cannot be allowed to fall prey to addiction and overdose. So, a recent clinical trial led by Latigo Biotherapeutics evaluated a new non-opioid pain medication called LTG-001, which...

HHS Announces New Peer Support Prevention Services to Strengthen Families, Advancing the Great American Recovery & A Home for Every Child Initiatives

DES MOINES, IA — AUGUST 18, 2026 — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) today added new peer support programs to the Title-IV Prevention Services Clearinghouse, for which all states can now claim federal reimbursement. The expansion advances the Trump Administration's Great American Recovery and A Home for Every Child initiatives by equipping states with evidence-based resources to help parents overcome addiction, thereby strengthening families and reducing the number of children entering foster care. HHS Secretary...

Justice Department watchdog to review DEA tactic that permitted deadly fentanyl to hit streets

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Justice Department's internal watchdog on Monday announced a review of a controversial tactic in which federal law enforcement allowed fentanyl to hit the streets to build bigger cases against drug traffickers. The review will examine government policies and wiretap investigations in which the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration may have learned of fentanyl deliveries before they happened but stood down to avoid jeopardizing larger prosecutions. Current and former agents said that investigative strategy — known as allowing drugs to “walk” — amounts to a gamble with public safety...

States enact emergency orders on kratom while awaiting federal rules

States are moving faster and further than federal regulators to get kratom off store shelves, with some banning the herb outright while a pending federal rule targets only one of its chemicals. Massachusetts acted Thursday. Its public health commissioner, Dr. Robbie Goldstein, issued a temporary emergency order placing all forms of kratom into Schedule I under state law. Schedule I substances are subject to the most stringent controls. The order also gives local health boards

more authority to take action against stores that keep selling the products—sometimes referred to as "gas station heroin." North Dakota went farther...

Low-Dose Hydrocortisone Led to Cognitive Benefits in Women With HIV

Low-dose hydrocortisone (LDH) improved aspects of cognition in women with virally suppressed HIV, a randomized trial showed. In the first phase of the two-phase study, women who received a single 10-mg dose of oral LDH had significantly improved learning scores at 4 hours after dosing (Cohen's $d=0.35$, $P=0.03$), as well as significantly better attention scores at 30 minutes (Cohen's $d=0.38$, $P=0.02$) and 4 hours (Cohen's $d=0.42$, $P=0.01$), compared with those in the placebo group. However, there were no significant treatment effects for working memory, visuospatial abilities, or executive function, reported Leah Rubin, PhD, MPH, of...

Meta heads to court in a landmark trial about kids and social media addiction

Meta will head into federal court on Tuesday to fend off accusations from a group of state attorneys general that it designed its social media platforms to hook children, lied to the public about the risks those platforms posed and gathered data on kids in violation of the law. The case is the latest in a wave of suits against social media companies, meant to hold them accountable for the way they design their products. Legal experts compare it to landmark litigation against tobacco and opioid manufacturers that changed those companies' behaviors as well as the public discussion about the risks of cigarettes...

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

There are no new NIH Grants Funding Opportunities to post this week.

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