



Poisoning deaths among teenagers rose 91 percent between 2000 and 2009, primarily due to prescription drug abuse, according to a new report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Prescription drug abuse appears to be replacing marijuana as a "gateway drug" that leads to the abuse of harder drugs, said Dr. Julie Gilchrist of the CDC's Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention.

Overall, death rates from unintentional injuries of children and teenagers decreased by almost 30 percent between 2000 and 2009, in large part because of a 41 percent drop in motor vehicle deaths, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Drug poisoning deaths among teens could be reduced by appropriate prescribing, proper storage and disposal, discouraging sharing of medication, and state-based prescription drug monitoring programs, the CDC stated in a press release.

According to the agency, the percentage of poisoning deaths among teens ages 15 to 19 with prescription drugs as a contributing cause rose from 30 percent in 2000, to 57 percent in 2009.

To learn more about issues relating to prescription drug addiction, [click here](#).