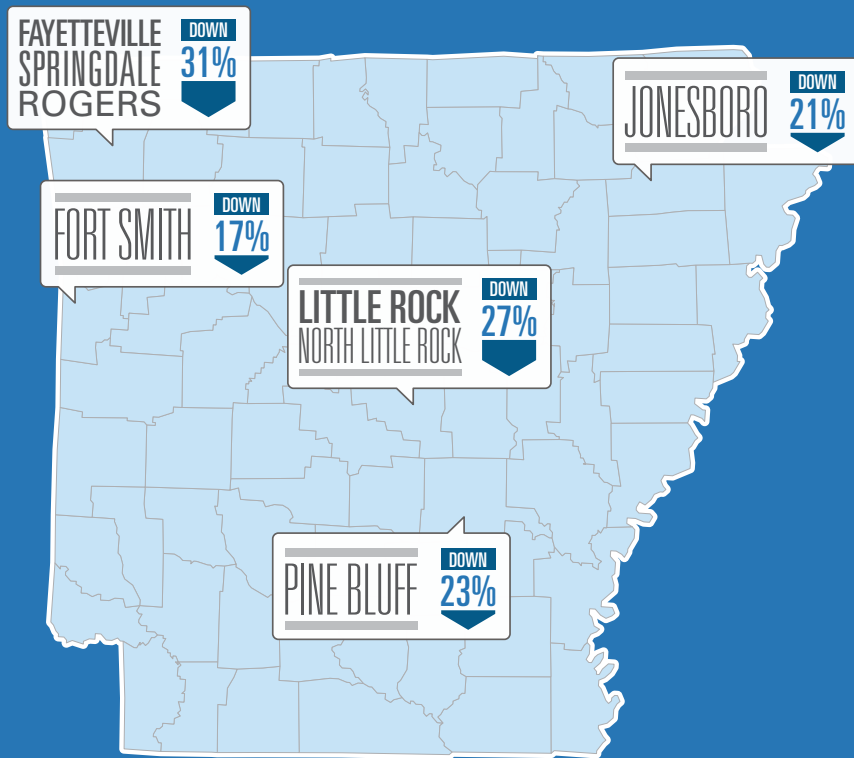


Fighting the opioid epidemic in Arkansas

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield and the larger Blue Cross and Blue Shield system have made progress toward preventing inappropriate prescription opioid use. But the opioid epidemic remains a critical health crisis in the state and country.

Decrease in opioid prescriptions statewide



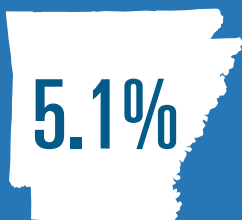
(Percent change in opioid prescriptions per 1,000 Blue Cross and Blue Shield members, 2013-2017)



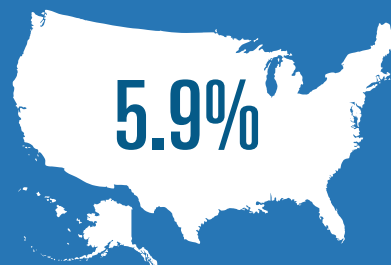
-27%

DECREASE IN OPIOID PRESCRIPTIONS FOR ARKANSAS GROUP MEMBERS

(Per 1,000 members)



As we continue to fight opioid use disorder in Arkansas, **5.1 per 1,000** Blue Cross and Blue Shield members are diagnosed. That's below the national average of **5.9 per 1,000**.



39%

 DECREASE IN OPIOID QUANTITY DISPENSED

Opioid use disorder prevention

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield Pharmacy is fighting opioid addiction. We use our medical, pharmacy and data management tools to monitor and prevent over-prescribing and diversion of prescription opioids and other controlled substances. It's just one way we're helping keep our members safe and healthy.

Questions?

Contact your Arkansas Blue Cross representative to learn more about how we're safeguarding your employees from opioid use disorder.



Arkansas
BlueCross BlueShield

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What we're doing at Arkansas Blue Cross

At Arkansas Blue Cross, we're taking steps to cut down on substance-use disorder. We provide case management, behavioral health and medication-assistance treatment support for members who have our pharmacy benefits and additional help for those with case management.

Here are some of the initiatives we've taken.

Quality of care programs

- Hired substance-use prevention coordinator
- Communicate with prescribers about patients on drug combinations that could produce overdose
- Case manage members who meet certain thresholds

Quantity limits/utilization management/plan design

- Limit to 7-day fills for acute pain patients
- Decrease quantity limit for chronic pain patients (more closely match CDC guidelines)
- Require patients to use immediate-release opioids first before moving to extended release
- Removed the prior authorization from Suboxone™
- Removed member cost-share from naloxone on fully-insured business

Network initiatives

- Provide reporting around opioids to collaborative health and other physician group partners
- Required registration with the PDMP for physicians to be in the network

Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas grants

- Provided a grant to help police officers have naloxone
- Provided a grant to fund prescriber education

Arkansas Blue Cross will remain focused on new, effective ways to fight this national crisis and reduce opioid dependency with our membership.

Questions?

Contact your Arkansas Blue Cross representative to learn more about how we're safeguarding your employees from opioid use disorder.

This report builds upon and provides updated results on a previously published BCBS Health of America report from 2017 entitled, "America's opioid epidemic and its effect on the nation's commercially-insured population." It is based on the prescription and medical claims of over 41 million commercially insured BCBS members. In this report, "opioids" include prescription opioid medications. Members diagnosed with cancer who were undergoing palliative or hospice care were excluded from this analysis. For more information on how BCBS is addressing America's opioid epidemic, see: <https://www.bcbs.com/the-health-of-america/addressing-americas-opioid-addiction>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that, on average, 115 Americans die each day from an opioid-related overdose. Further, the CDC cites that of those 115 deaths, about 46 people die per day from overdoses linked to prescription opioid medications. For more information, see: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html>, <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/overdose.html> and <https://wonder.cdc.gov/>

Arkansas Blue Cross Pharmacy data shows the total dispensed unit quantity of opioids has decreased 37% from January 2015 through March 2018.

All tips and advice here are recommended by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA provides helpful resources to raise awareness of opioid use and addiction. Information above is found within the BCBSA study that examines opioid prescription rates, opioid use patterns and opioid use disorder among commercially insured BCBS members.



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