

Anti-Anxiety dispensations in Alberta: 2010-2016

Age-standardized dispensation rates for anti-anxiety medications by First Nations status and sex

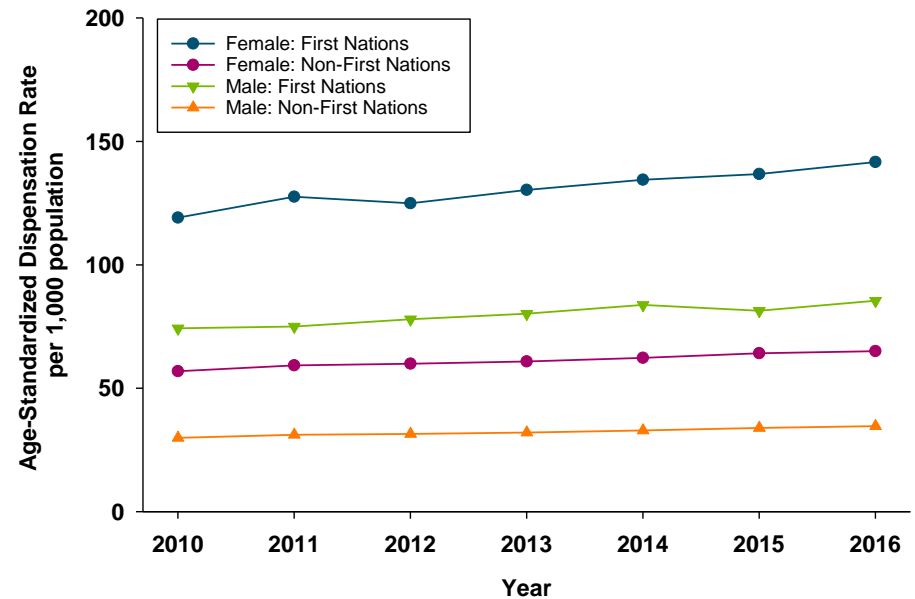
Feelings of nervousness and worry occur in our everyday lives. For anxiety disorders, these feelings can last for long periods (at least six months) and physical symptoms such as a fast heart rate or shakiness can also occur.^{1,2} Approximately 12 per cent of Canadians are affected with anxiety disorders.² Treatment of anxiety disorders are patient specific, but can include counselling, medication, and support groups.¹

In today's edition of *First Nations – Health Trends Alberta*,² we present age-standardized rates per 1,000 population for at least one dispensation of anti-anxiety medications by First Nations status and sex between 2010 and 2016. The Pharmaceutical Information Network (PIN) was used to obtain anti-anxiety drugs dispensed from community pharmacies in Alberta.

Anti-anxiety dispensation rates highest among First Nations women

In Alberta, there was an annual average of 181,000 people (13,000 First Nations and 168,000 non-First Nations) with at least one dispensation of anti-anxiety medications. Anti-anxiety dispensation rates were approximately two times higher among First Nations compared to non-First Nations between 2010 and 2016 among both males (2.5 times higher) and females (2.1 times higher). Overall, the anti-anxiety dispensation rate per 1,000 population increased by approximately 15 per cent for First Nations males and non-First Nations people between 2010 and 2016. For First Nations women, the dispensation rate increased by 20 per cent during the same period.

Dispensation rates were higher among females compared to males (First Nations: females 1.6 times higher than males; non-First Nations: females 1.9 times higher than males). The dispensation rate was highest among First Nations women (in 2016: 142 per 1,000 population), followed by First Nations males (in 2016: 85 per 1,000 population), non-First Nations females (in 2016: 65 per 1,000 population), and non-First Nations males (in 2016: 35 per 1,000 population).



¹ <http://www.cmha.ca/mental-health/understanding-mental-illness/anxiety-disorders/>

² http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/miic-mmhc/chap_4-eng.php

³ This is the 19th in a series of First Nations-specific Health Trends compiled in collaboration by Alberta Health and the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre (AFNIGC). To suggest future topics, please contact the AFNIGC (communications@afnigc.ca; 403-539-5775).