

Psychoactive Substance-Related Emergency Department Visits: A 2024 Retrospective Review



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INTRODUCTION

Psychoactive substance use is a growing public health concern, leading to a wide range of medical emergencies.

Polysubstance use increases case severity, complicating clinical management.

Data-driven retrospective reviews are crucial for **identifying trends** and improving acute care responses.

METHODS

 Retrospective review of ED visits from 2024 involving psychoactive substance use (n=76)

 Data collected:

- Demographics
- Substances Involved
- Clinical Findings
- Mode of Presentation

Data Collection

Demographics



Demographics



Substances



Mode of Arrival

RESULTS

76 ED Visits (2024)

with Psychoactive Substance Use

Demographics

- 61% Male
- 39% Female
- Mean age: 30 years
- Common age group: 15–50 years

Substances

- Cannabis most frequent: 38.9%
- Often combined with:
 - Cocaine
 - Benzodiazepines
 - Antidepressants

Clinical Presentation

- Anxiety, Agitation
- Psychotic features, Vomiting
- Tachycardia

MODE of ARRIVAL



Majority via ambulance

OUTCOMES

- Hospital admission: 24%
- ICU care: 16% of admitted
- 0 fatalities

 **Polysubstance use**
most severe presentations

CONCLUSIONS

- **Young adults** constitute the predominant ED population in substance-related presentations.
- **Cannabis** is the most frequently encountered substance; however, **clinical severity** is driven by **polysubstance exposure**.
- **Structured institutional surveillance** enables early **risk identification** and supports system-level preparedness.