

NCHS is the federal agency that tracks drug overdose deaths in America, and for the past few years has been releasing preliminary or “provisional” numbers on a monthly basis, covering the most recent 12 month period. This week marked the first estimate of drug overdose deaths for the full year of 2018.

And while not yet final, the data point to the first full year of decline in the number of drug overdose deaths in the country in decades. According to these provisional numbers, 68,557 people died of drug overdoses in 2018, which is lower than the final tally of 70,237 in 2017.

NCHS also released a study documenting the percentage of American adolescents, ages 16-19, who have attempted to lose weight in the past year. According to 2013-2016 data, nearly 40% of these teens tried to lose weight in the past year. Females were more likely to attempt to lose weight than males, and Hispanic teens were considerably more likely to try to lose weight than white, black or Asian teens. Over 50% of Hispanic teens tried to lose weight in the past year.

And in a third study, NCHS examined eye disorders and vision loss among adults diagnosed with diabetes. The study found that among adults age 45 and older with diabetes, nearly 1 in 3 – or 32% - had cataracts, while 8.6% had diabetic retinopathy, 7% had glaucoma and over 4% had macular degeneration. Of those with diabetes, over 9% had vision loss due to cataracts, while 4% had vision loss due to diabetic retinopathy, and 2% had vision loss due to glaucoma and another 2% due to macular degeneration.