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Why life expectancy in America is down again

为什么美国人口预期寿命再次下降

Overall life expectancy in America fell fractionally in 2017, from 78.7 to 78.6 years, according to data published recently by the US Centres for Disease Control. Underlying the drop was a bad year for influenza and a slight increase in the toll of Alzheimer's disease. But more significant was an increase in suicides and overdoses, which added 2.4 more deaths per 100,000 Americans.

根据美国疾病控制中心最近公布的数据，2017 年美国的总体预期寿命从 78.7 岁略微下降到 78.6 岁。下降的深层原因在于去年糟糕的流感，和阿尔茨海默症患者死亡率的略微上升。但更显著的原因是自杀和过量服药（导致死亡）的增加，这使得每 10 万个美国人中增加了 2.4 人死亡。

The figures make dramatic reading. In 1999, suicide took the lives of 10.5 Americans out of every 100,000. That increased to 14 in 2017. In the intervening years, death rates from drug overdoses surged from 6.1 to 21.7 per 100,000. Overdose deaths climbed 256% over that period.

相关数据读起来是惊人的。1999 年，每 10 万人中有 10.5 人死于自杀；到 2017 年，自杀人数增加到了 14 个。同期，药物过量致死率从每 10 万人中有 6.1 人猛增到 21.7 人，因过量服药而死亡的人数在这段时间里上升了 256%。

Over the longer term, suicide rates are now at a historical high, but only a little higher than they were in 1950. But drug-overdose rates, which were well below five per 100,000 people between 1950 and 1990, climbed above that rate by the turn of the century, and then spiked dramatically, reaching above 20 deaths per 100,000 in 2017.

从更长远来看，自杀率现在达到了有史以来的最高点，但其实仅略高于 1950 年的水平。而在 1950 年至 1990 年期间，10 万人里仅有不到 5 人因过量服药死亡，在上世纪末这一比例被超过，随后急剧上升，到 2017 年，10 万人中有超过 20 人死于药物过量。

Christopher Ruhm, an economist at the University of Virginia, points to the importance of public health efforts to control the opioid epidemic. The recent experience of Dayton, Ohio backs him up: over the past year, opioid deaths have more than halved. Public health experts attribute that to a combination of Medicaid expansion; declining street availability of some of the most addictive opioids; and post-treatment support for recovering addicts. 克里斯托弗·鲁姆，一位来自弗吉尼亚大学的经济学家，指出来自公共卫生方面的努力对控制阿片类药物的泛滥十分关键。最近俄亥俄州代顿市的经历佐证了他的观点：在过去一年里，代顿市的阿片类药物死亡人数减少了一半以上。公共卫生专家将此归功于医疗补助计划的扩大、一些易上瘾阿片类药物街头供应量的下降、以及对戒毒者的后续治疗支持。

In October, new legislation made it through Congress and was signed by President Donald Trump. It should help increase access to addiction treatment, and help rein in the over-prescription of opioids.

今年 10 月，由唐纳德·特朗普总统签署的新法案在（美国）国会通过。它应有助于增加人们获得成瘾治疗的机会，并有助于控制阿片类药物的过量开药。

-----文章来源 / 经济学人

重点词汇

life expectancy /'laɪf ɪkspektənsi/

n. (尤指人的) 预期寿命

fractionally /'frækʃənəli/

adv. 微小地；极少地

- Could you just move a fraction to the right? (n.)
- a fractional increase (adj.)

underlie/ˌʌndərˈlaɪ/

v. 是...的深层原因；对...有重大影响

- Psychological problems very often underlie physical disorders.

influenza/ˌɪnfluˈenzə/

n. 流感 (flu 的正式说法)

overdose/ˈoʊvərdoʊs/

n. 过量服药

- an overdose of sleeping pills

make (for) adj. reading

(文字、数据等) 读起来怎么样

- The story made (for) interesting reading. _

take (sb's) life

杀死某人

- Take his life.
- take one's own life

intervening/ˌɪntərˈviːnɪŋ/

adj. 发生于其间的

- international

surge/sɜːrdʒ/

v. 激增，陡增，剧烈上升

- house prices have surged
- a surge in house prices (n.) _

historical/historic high/hɪˈstɔːrɪkl haɪ, hɪˈstɔːrɪk haɪ/

n. 历史新高，历史最高纪录

the turn of sth.

转变时期；转折点

- the turn of the tide

spike/spaɪk/

v. (通常指在下跌前的) 上升至非常高的数量, 价格或程度

- The jobless rate spiked to a five-year high.
- price spikes (n.)

point to

指出 (重要性)

opioid epidemic

阿片类药物泛滥

- a flu epidemic
- the gun epidemic

halve/hæv/

v. 减半; 使减半

- halve the potato

back sb. up

支持, 帮助某人; 为某人作证

- Nothing to do with me! Xueli will back me up.

Medicaid/'medɪkeɪd/

n. (美国面向穷人的) 医疗补助制度

make it through

通过; 熬过, 挺过 (难关)

- You made it, bro!
- She wouldn't make it through the night.

rein in

抑制, 控制; 约束

- rein in a horse
- rein in our curiosity

over-prescription /'oʊvər prɪ'skrɪpʃn/

n. (没有必要的) 开药过量

- prescription drug

Alzheimer's disease/'æltʃaɪmərz dɪziːz/

n. 阿尔茨海默病，老年痴呆症