



**ZERO TO THREE**  
Early connections last a lifetime

# Breakout Session 4: Addiction to Alcohol and Opiates, a Multi-Generational Medical Disorder

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# Today's Agenda



**9:45 Introductions**

**9:50 Understanding Addiction  
as a Medical Disorder**

**10:05 The Impact of Opiates/  
Opioids on Adults and Their  
Children**

**10:20 The Lifelong Influence of  
Prenatal Alcohol Exposure**

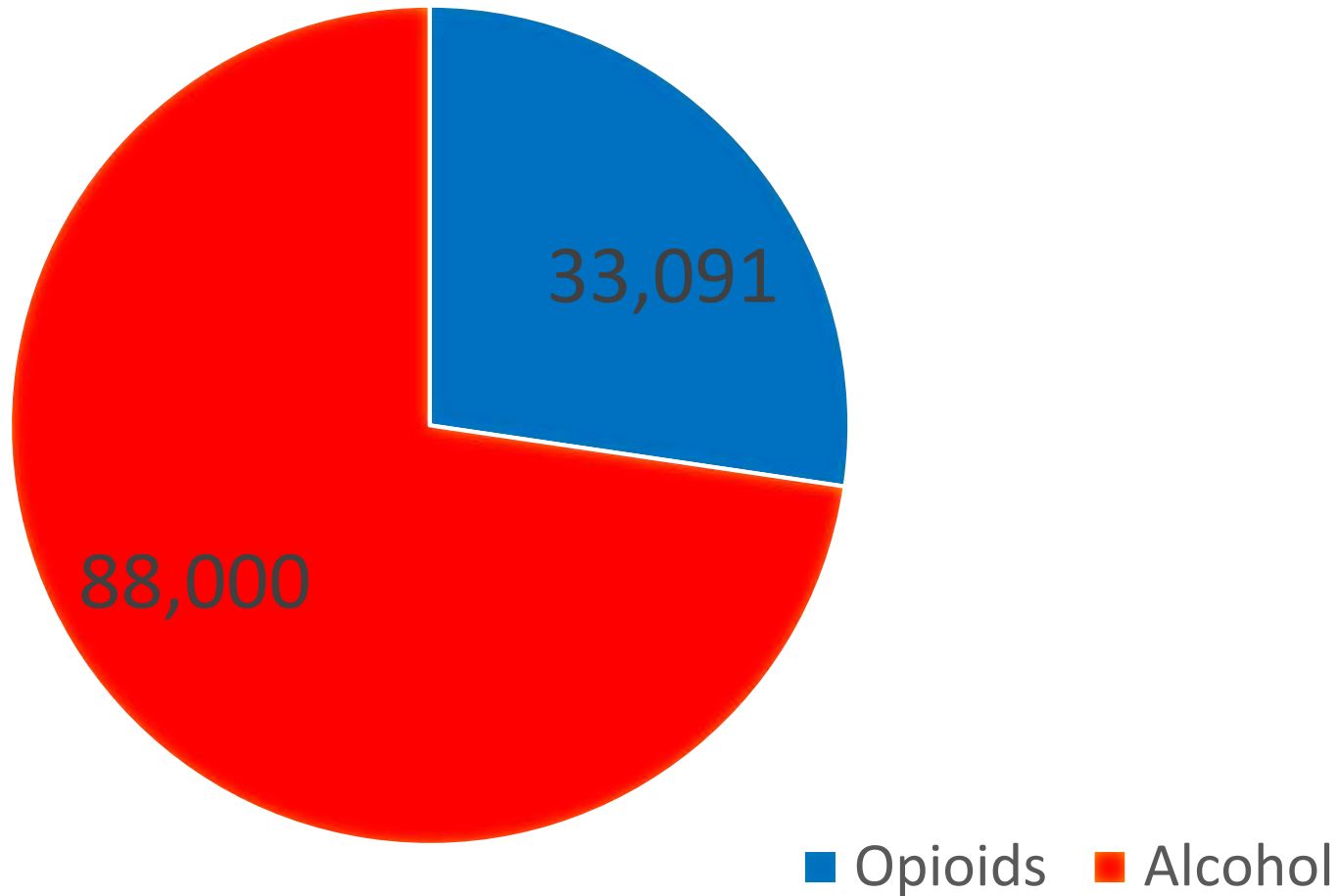
**10:40 Q & A**



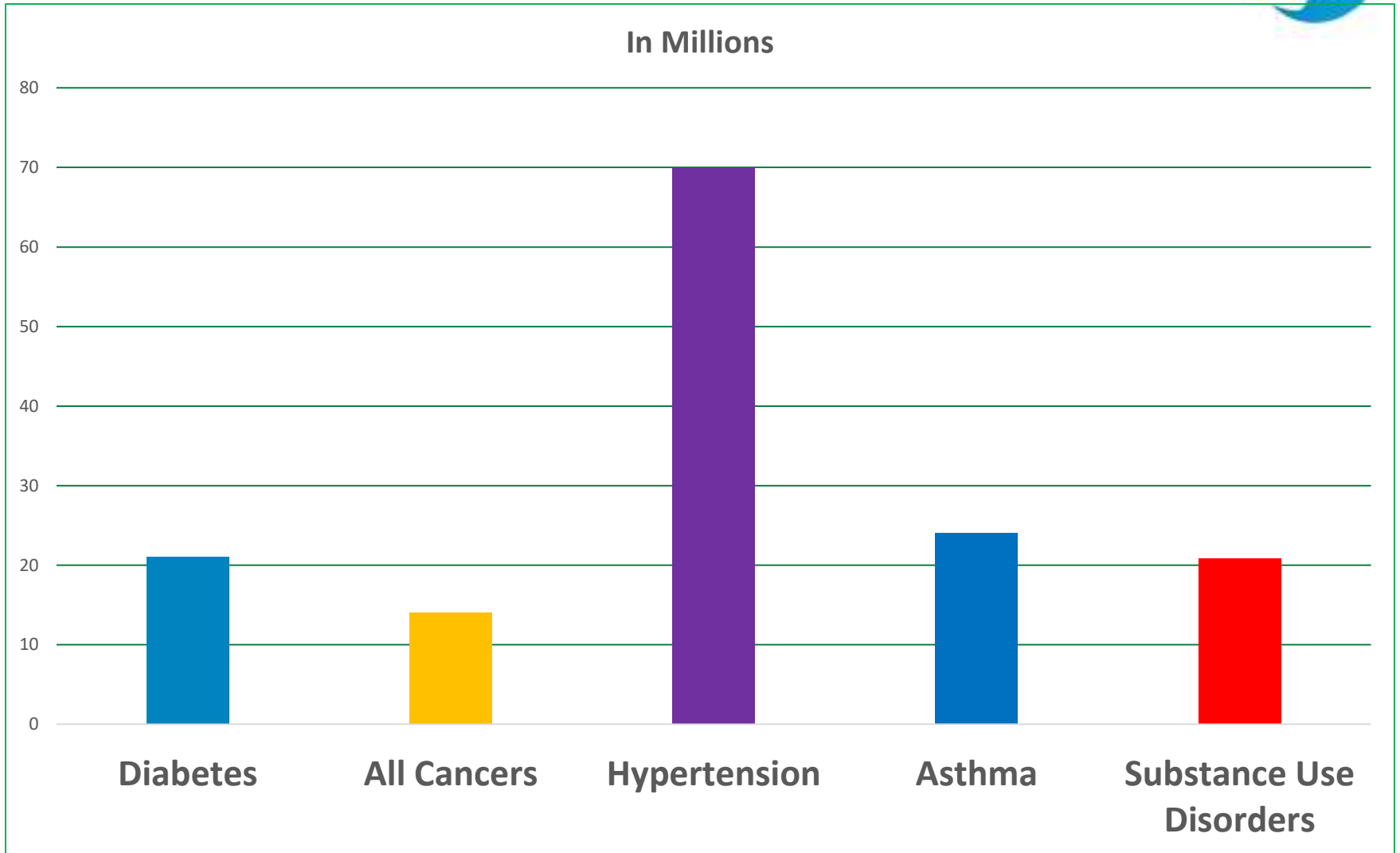
# Annual Deaths in the U.S.



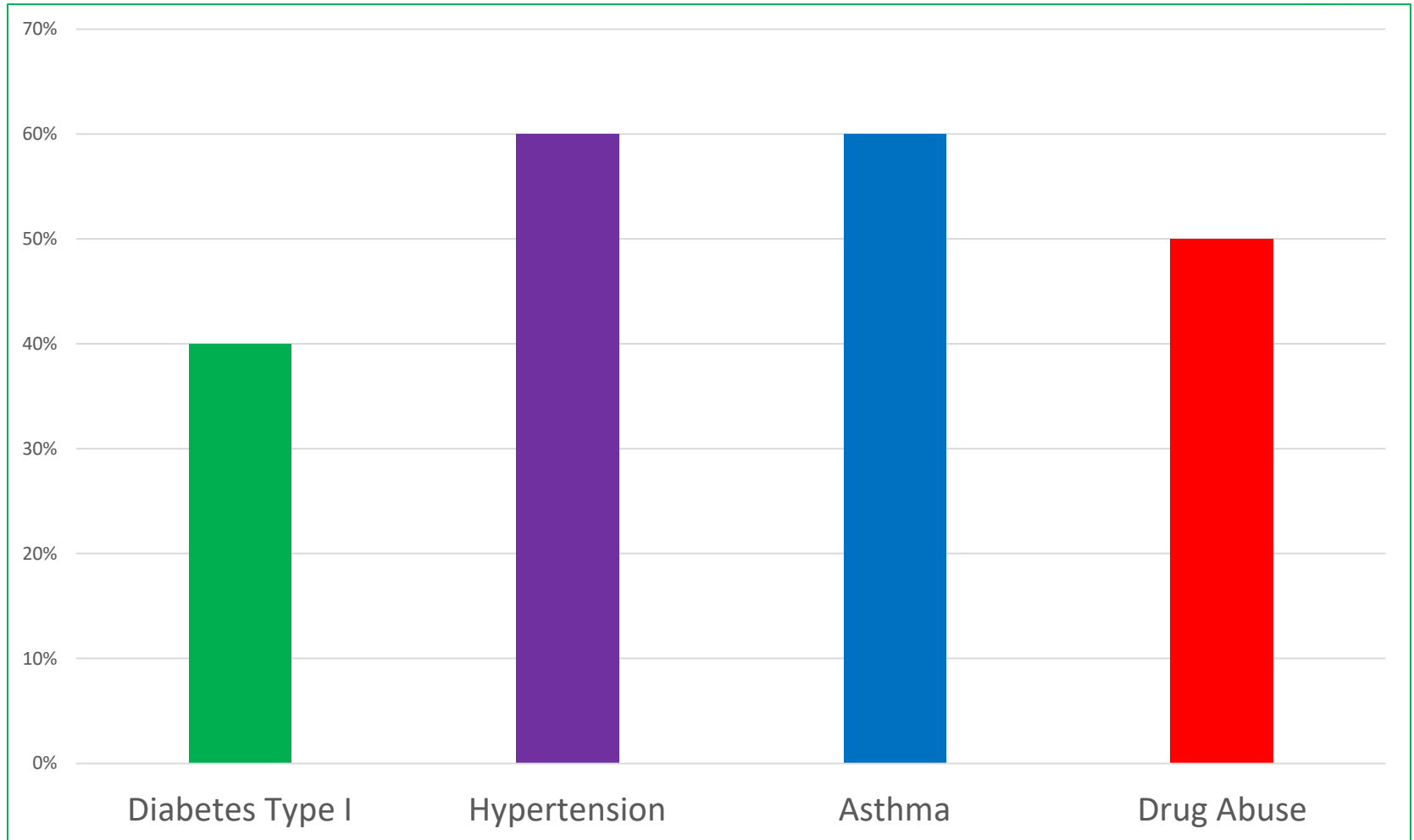
2015 DATA FROM NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE,  
U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



# Public Health Challenges



# Relapse Rates for Chronic Medical Conditions



# Is there an “addictive personality”?



- Fiendish
- Demonic
- Driven by ravenous hedonism
- Weak
- Unreliable
- Selfish
- Out of control



- Criminal propensity
- Lazy
- Promiscuous
- Violent
- Childish
- Devious
- Unable to tell the truth

# Causes of Addiction



- Heredity
- Prenatal exposure to alcohol
- Trauma in childhood
- Social rejection
- Emotional protection



# The Roots of Addiction



Secure housing  
Adequate nutrition  
Prenatal care  
Support from partner &  
family



Stress, poverty,  
homelessness, racism, poor  
diet, smoking  
Domestic violence  
Depression  
Addiction  
No prenatal care





# What causes people to become addicted to drugs and alcohol?



# Addiction is a Medical Disorder



The AA **Big Book** says:

*Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves.*

The US Surgeon General says:

*Addiction to alcohol or drugs is a chronic but treatable brain disease that requires medical intervention, not moral judgement... Evidence-based treatments—both medications and behavioral therapies—can save lives and restore people's health, well-being and functioning.*

# Public Health Approach to Addiction



1. Adopt the World Health Organization recommendation: decriminalize all drug use and personal-level possession.
2. Eliminate punishment for personal drug possession or relapse.
3. Regulate time and place where drug use is permitted.
4. Create opportunities for decent jobs, safe housing, and food sufficiency in your community.
5. Recognize addiction as a developmental disorder.
6. Teach children to cope with their temperaments in healthy ways.
7. Treat addicts as individuals who will travel their own road to health.
8. Recognize that healthy life changes set the stage for sobriety; sobriety should not be a prerequisite for services.

