

PRESCRIPTION

FACT SHEET

DRUG DESCRIPTION

Prescription drug abuse is the use of medication without a personal prescription or in a manner or dosage not prescribed for the feeling that it may create. The non-medical use of prescription drugs refers to three main categories: opioids, depressants, and stimulants.

WHAT MEDICINES ARE TYPICALLY ABUSED?

OPIOIDS Usually prescribed to treat pain

- Vicodin
- Codeine
- Hydrocodone
- Oxycodone

DEPRESSANTS Usually prescribed to treat anxiety and sleep disorders

- Valium®
- Klonopin®
- Ambien®
- Seroquel®
- Xanax®

STIMULANTS Usually prescribed to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

- Adderall®
- Concerta®
- Ritalin®

COUGH SYRUPS Both over the counter and prescribed forms

- DayQuil®
- NyQuil®

WHAT MAKES IT UNSAFE?

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Misusers of prescription drugs may overload their system because the medicine does not take into account their height, weight, or previous medical history.

FORM & DOSE

"When misused, prescription drugs may be taken in larger amounts or in ways that change the way the drug works in the body and brain, putting the person at greater risk for an overdose."

SIDE EFFECTS

Normal side effect experienced when taking a prescription drug may be worsened or amplified due to misuse.

SPECTRUM OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE



Taking someone else's prescription medication



Taking a prescription medication in a way other than prescribed.



Taking a prescription medication to get high.



Mixing it with other drugs.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

FACT SHEET

Q & A ABOUT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Q: HOW PREVALENT IS THIS?

A: Prescription drug abuse is a growing health concern in our nation having become the third most commonly misused substances by Americans age 14+ (after marijuana and alcohol). According to SAMSHA, in their 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health results indicated that about 15 million people aged 12 or older used prescription drugs non-medically in that year alone.

Q: ARE THEY ADDICTIVE?

A: Yes. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens, "prescription drugs... can cause physical dependence that could lead to addiction. Medications that affect the brain can change the way it works—especially when they are taken over an extended period of time or with escalating doses. They can change the reward system, making it harder for a person to feel good without the drug and possibly leading to intense cravings, which make it hard to stop using."

Q: WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY?

A: Effects range due to dose, manner consumed, and medication taken. However known effects are as follows:

- Opioids: Sleepy, nauseous, constipated, difficulty breathing
- Depressants: Slurred speech, shallow breathing, sleepiness, disorientation, lack of coordination, and even seizures
- Stimulants: Paranoia, increased heart rate and body temperature

Q: HOW DO I DISPOSE OF UNWANTED/EXPIRED MEDICINE?

A: Do not flush medicine- this may lead to pollution of soil or nearby ground water. Instead, look up drop box locations in your community that can dispose of the medicine properly. Also check to see if your community police or prevention agency hosts a "Take-Back Day" in which authorized collectors safely and securely collect and dispose your unwanted or expired medication.

Q: CAN YOU OVERDOSE?

A: Yes. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens, "more than half of the drug overdose deaths in the United States each year are caused by prescription drug misuse." Increased risk for overdosing occurs by mixing different prescription drugs and by combining opioids with alcohol consumption.

Q: HOW CAN I HELP SOMEONE WHO IS
ABUSING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS?

A: Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK. This service covers more issues than suicide and can help put you in touch with the available services.

If you need information on treatment and where you can find it, you can call: Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator at 1-800-662-HELP or visit www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov.

Information obtained from: The National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Administration



PLEDGEFORLIFE.ORG