

COMMONLY ABUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

1. Stimulants are prescribed to treat ADHD or narcolepsy.

These medications, which include Adderall, Concerta and Ritalin, can speed up brain activity, which causes increased alertness, attention and energy.

2. Sedatives/depressants are prescribed to treat anxiety, panic attacks and sleep disorders.

These medications, which include Valium, Xanax and Ambien, slow down or "depress" the functions of the brain and central nervous system.

3. Opioids are prescribed to treat moderate-to-severe pain.

These medications, which include Vicodin, OxyContin and Percocet, can block pain messages from reaching the brain and give a feeling of euphoria.



HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you suspect a friend, roommate or loved one is abusing prescription drugs, there is help.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)
Contact: 240-276-2750
www.csat.samhsa.gov

SAMHSA's National Helpline:
800-662-HELP (English and Spanish)
800-487-4889 (TDD)

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator:
www.samhsa.gov/treatment



Illinois Department of Public Health
Division of Medical Cannabis
535 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761

Toll-free: 855-636-3688
Phone: 217-785-4093
TTY: 800 547-0466

E-mail: DPH.MedicalCannabis@illinois.gov

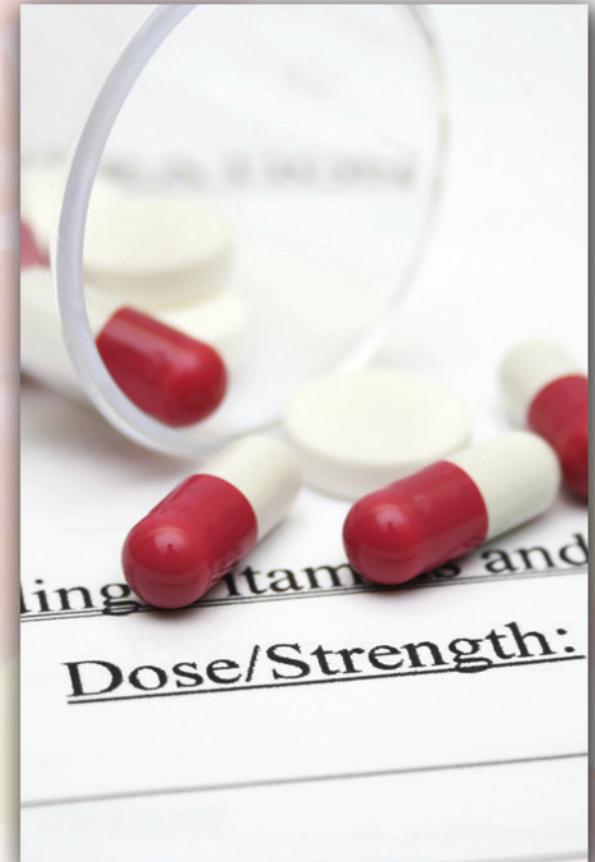
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A Slippery Slope: The Dangers of Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse



**MISUSE OF PRESCRIPTION
DRUGS CAN KILL YOU.**

MAKING SENSE OF MISUSE AND ABUSE

Someone is **misusing** a prescription medication if they take a medication prescribed to them differently or at a higher dose than recommended by their physician, or they use someone else's medication.



Someone is **abusing** a prescription drug if they intentionally use a prescription drug to experiment, feel good or get "high." Someone who abuses prescription drugs also is likely to combine them with alcohol and/or other pills and then snort or inject them to get a quicker, more intense high.

Whatever the reason, using medications without a prescription is **illegal** and can lead to addiction, overdose and even **death**.



Many people mistakenly believe prescription medications are safe because they are FDA approved and prescribed by a doctor. However, all medications have risks and they are only safe when taken as directed by the person for whom they were prescribed. Misusing or abusing prescription medications is dangerous and can lead to long-term health problems, such as:

- High blood pressure or heart rate
- Organ damage
- Addiction
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Death

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Common reactions to misuse and abuse of prescription drugs include:

- Anxiety
- Dizziness
- Inability to concentrate
- Paranoia
- Vomiting
- Increase in body temperature
- Hostility
- Euphoria
- Sweating
- Decreased energy levels

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

When someone is addicted to prescription drugs, sudden cessation is often very dangerous. The safest way to quit is a slow decrease in the amount of drugs used under the supervision of a health professional.

Withdrawal symptoms can include:

- Seizures
- Chills
- Nausea
- Insomnia
- Drastic mood changes
- Pain
- Raised blood pressure
- Sweating
- Death