



Rx Drug Fact Sheet

- It is only safe to use prescription drugs when they are prescribed for you by a doctor for a current problem.
- Mixing Rx pills with other drugs or with alcohol exponentially increases your risk of death from accidental overdose.
- Abuse of prescription stimulants, like Ritalin and Adderall, can cause serious health problems, including panic attacks, seizures, and heart attacks.
- According to research by The Partnership at Drugfree.org, one in six teens say they have taken a prescription medicine that was not prescribed to them at least once in their lifetime.
- Signs of prescription drug abuse include: sudden changes in one's behavior or personality, social withdrawal, moodiness, irritability, paranoia, defensiveness, aggression, poor work performance, and poor physical health.
- Abusing stimulants, like Ritalin or Adderall, can cause an irregular heartbeat and raise the body's temperature to dangerously high levels. They can also cause heart attacks or seizures.
- Abuse of over-the-counter cough syrup containing dextromethorphan (DXM) can cause irregular heartbeats, blackouts, seizures, brain damage, and death.

Opioids

- Heroin and prescription pain pills both belong to the same class of drugs: opioids.
- Taking too many painkillers, like Oxycontin or Vicodin, can slow down or stop your breathing.
- More people die each year from prescription pain reliever overdoses (like Vicodin and Oxycontin) than from heroin and cocaine combined.
- According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, nearly half of young people who use heroin reported abusing prescription opioids before starting heroin.
- Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times as powerful as heroin. In 2016, deaths from synthetic opioids rose 73% to 9,580.
- What does an opioid overdose look like?
 - Their face is extremely pale/clammy to the touch
 - Their body goes limp
 - Their fingernails or lips have a purple or blue color
 - They start vomiting or making gurgling noises
 - They cannot be awakened/are unable to speak
 - Their breathing or heartbeat slows or stops
- If someone has overdosed, immediately call 911

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Prescription Painkiller Overdoses in the US.* www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/PainkillerOverdoses/index.html

National Institute on Drug Abuse. *Facts on Prescription and Over-the-counter Drugs.*

www.teens.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/peerx/pdf/PEERx_Toolkit_FactSheets_OTC_012313.pdf

The Medicine Abuse Project. *Fact Sheet: Preventing Teen Prescription Medicine Abuse.*

www.medicineabuseproject.org/images/uploads/misx/fact_sheet.pdf

NCADD. *Fact Sheet: Prescription Drug Abuse.* www.ncadd.org/images/stories/PDF/factsheet_ncadd_%20prescriptiondrugs.pdf