

Learn about Prescription Drug Misuse

What is a prescription drug?

Prescription drugs are used to cure, treat or prevent illness or health problems. Only doctors and those with a license can write prescriptions because there can be risks to taking medicine. Doctors prescribe drugs based on:

- Your illness or health problem
- Your weight
- Your health history
- Your allergies
- Other drugs/supplements you take
- The benefit you might get from taking the drug

What is prescription drug misuse?

Prescription drug misuse means using a drug in a way it shouldn't be used, which includes:

- Taking drugs that are prescribed for someone else
- Taking more than the prescribed dose
- Mixing drugs with alcohol or illegal drugs
- Using a drug for the feeling it gives you

What happens when you misuse prescription drugs?

Misusing prescription drugs can have serious effects on your health and can even cause death. For example, opioids should be taken with great care. Opioids include prescription pain killers which change the way the brain works when taken over a period of time. This can increase the chances of someone becoming addicted (hooked). This can happen to anyone.

How can you tell when someone is misusing prescription drugs?

Warning signs of prescription drug misuse include:

- Loss of interest in friends, appearance, sports or social activities
- Change in friends
- Change in mood/personality
- Sleeping a lot or at times that are different than usual
- Using higher doses of prescribed drugs



(Turn page over for more information)

- Going to more than one doctor to get prescriptions
- Stealing, forging or selling prescriptions
- “Losing” prescriptions often to get more

Where can you get help if you are misusing prescription drugs?

If you think you are misusing prescription drugs or know someone who is, there is help.

There is good treatment for substance use disorders and people can recover. You can get help from your doctor or

- Alliance Behavioral Healthcare Services (800) 510-9132
- Fellowship Health Resources (919) 573-6544
- Healing Transitions (919) 838-9800
- Recovery Communities of North Carolina (919) 231-0248.
- SouthLight Health Care (919) 787-6131

