

Prescription Medications



Brief Description:

Prescription drugs that are abused or used for nonmedical reasons can alter brain activity and lead to dependence. Commonly abused classes of prescription drugs include opioids (often prescribed to treat pain), central nervous system depressants (often prescribed to treat anxiety and sleep disorders), and stimulants (prescribed to treat narcolepsy, ADHD, and obesity).

Street Names:

Opioids: Oxycodone (OxyContin), propoxyphene (Darvon), hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), meperidine (Demerol), diphenoxylate (Lomotil). Central nervous system depressants: Pentobarbital sodium (Nembutal), diazepam (Valium) and alprazolam (Xanax). Stimulants: Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine) and methylphenidate (Ritalin).

Effects:

Long-term use of opioids or central nervous system depressants can lead to physical dependence and addiction. Taken in high doses, stimulants can lead to compulsive use, paranoia, dangerously high body temperatures, and irregular heartbeat.

Statistics and Trends:

According to NIDA's 2005 Monitoring the Future study, 9.5% of high school seniors used hydrocodone (Vicodin) in the past year. Source: NIDA Infofacts: High School and Youth Trends.

View Complete Report:

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/infofacts/PainMed.html>

Drug Fact Sheets reprinted with permission from National Institute on Drug Abuse (www.nida.nih.gov)