GenerationRx

Preventing the Misuse and Abuse of Prescription Medications

THE OTHER FRESHMAN 15

Fifteen facts about prescription drug abuse that could save your life!

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

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The 15 facts:

1) Prescription medications are among the **most abused substances** in the United States.
2) The average age when prescription drug abuse starts is **approximately 21.**
3) Non-medical use of prescription drugs by college students **has doubled** since the 1990's.
4) About **half of all college students** will have the opportunity to abuse a prescription drug by their sophomore year.
5) A growing campus culture of self-diagnosis and self-prescribing has the potential to **cause negative health effects** and lead to the dangers of **prescription drug abuse.**
6) Abusing prescription medications is **not a safe alternative** to using illicit "street" drugs.
7) Using medications like Vicodin®, Adderall®, or Xanax® that aren't prescribed for you is **against federal and state laws.**
8) Emergency department visits relating to prescription drug abuse now **exceed those relating to illicit "street" drugs.**
9) Some prescription medications **can be addicting.**
10) **Unintentional drug overdose** is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States.
11) Most people who abuse prescription medications get them from **family members or friends.**
12) It is critical that we **store prescription medications securely and properly dispose** of them when they are no longer needed to prevent misuse or abuse by others.
13) It is important to only use prescription medications **as prescribed by a healthcare professional.**
14) When you share your prescription medications with others, **you could be liable** if that person is harmed.
15) Prescription drugs can help us live longer and healthier lives – but **only if** they are used properly under medical supervision.

Sources:

National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2k10NSDUH/2k10Results.htm)

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (www.cdc.gov)

National Council on Patient Information and Education (www.talkaboutrx.org)

Monitoring the Future (Social Research Center, Institute for Social research, University of Michigan) (www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/series/00035)

Need help?: Contact your college or university counseling, student health or wellness center.

Talk with your family, your doctor or pharmacist, academic advisor, or resident advisor.

The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration provides a searchable directory of drug and alcohol treatment programs, see http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov.

For a poisoning emergency (e.g., drug overdose) in the U.S. call **1.800.222.1222.**

For more information: The Generation Rx Initiative (**go.osu.edu/generationrx** or **cardinalhealth.com/generationrx**)