



Prescription Drugs: Legal Doesn't Mean Always Safe

Used properly, prescription drugs can do wonderful things. But the abuse and misuse of prescription drugs can lead to trouble and even tragedy.

The problem:

- ▶ Prescription drug abuse is the intentional use of a medication without a legitimate prescription or just for the experience. An example is using a painkiller to get high.
- ▶ Painkillers, sedatives and stimulants are the most commonly abused prescription medications.
- ▶ Because prescription drugs are an important and legal part of our lives when used properly, many people believe they can't be dangerous. Used wrongly, they can be quite harmful and even deadly.
- ▶ Nearly one in five teens have used someone else's prescription drug to get high.
- ▶ The Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation had a 400 percent increase in prescription investigations from 2006-09.
- ▶ Emergency room visits related to prescription drug abuse or misuse have more than doubled in recent years.

▶ Prescription drug overdose deaths kill more people in Wyoming than methamphetamine, alcohol-related accidents and murder COMBINED!!!

What you can do:

- ▶ Store your medicines safely and securely. If needed, lock up your prescription drugs.
- ▶ Keep good track of all medications and where they are kept.
- ▶ Dispose of unused drugs properly to keep them out of others' hands. Many communities have safe drop-off locations.
- ▶ Don't take prescription medicines that are not prescribed for you and always follow dosing directions.
- ▶ When getting a new prescription, tell your healthcare provider and the pharmacist about all medications you are taking to avoid dangerous interactions.
- ▶ Be aware that illegal distribution of prescription controlled substances can lead to a major prison sentence.

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