



PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

In 2008, 15.2 million Americans age 12 or older had taken a prescription pain reliever, tranquilizer, stimulant, or sedative for nonmedical purposes. In other words, they took the drugs to get high. Here is a list of those drugs and why teens should avoid using them for recreational purposes:

Category: Prescription Stimulants

Doctors prescribe prescription stimulants to treat conditions like asthma, obesity, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). But when used without a doctor's permission, they can harm the body by causing the body's temperature to rise to a dangerous level or lead the heart to beat at an irregular rate. The end result could be a heart attack or seizure, either of which could result in death. Even if you don't suffer a seizure or heart attack, prescription stimulants can make you feel paranoid or hostile towards others. Examples of prescription stimulants are Ritalin, Dexedrine, and Adderall.

Category: Prescription Pain Killers

Doctors prescribe prescription painkillers to treat pain. When used recreationally, painkillers can cause constipation and drowsiness. They can also cause your

breathing to slow down. Continued abuse of painkillers can cause severe respiratory depression, which can lead to death. Severe respiratory depression is when a person's rate of breathing slows down to the point where the body is endangered. Even if a person has not been abusing painkillers for long, he or she can suffer severe respiratory depression if they take a large dose of painkillers at one time. Examples of prescription painkillers are OxyContin, Percocet, and Vicodin.

Category: Prescription Sedatives & Tranquilizers

Doctors prescribe prescription sedatives and tranquilizers to help people cope with anxiety, tension, and sleep disorders. Prescription sedatives are also known as barbiturates or sleeping pills. Prescription tranquilizers are also known as benzodiazepines. When used recreationally, sedatives and tranquilizers can impair a person's memory, judgment, and coordination. These drugs can also make you irritable and feel paranoid. Using prescription sedatives and tranquilizers with other substances—particularly alcohol—can slow breathing, or slow both the heart and respiration, and possibly lead to death.

Sources: The Partnership at Drugfree.org; National Institute on Drug Abuse