

THE REALITY OF MISUSE

COLLEGE STUDENTS & ADHD PRESCRIPTION STIMULANT MEDICATION

ADHD PRESCRIPTION STIMULANT MEDICATION WON'T MAKE YOU SMARTER

Some students who don't have ADHD are misusing ADHD prescription stimulants to try and boost their study performance. Yet in a large national survey of U.S. college students, those who earned a "B" or lower were almost twice as likely to report non-medical use of ADHD prescription stimulants than those who earned a "B+" or higher.¹ It goes to show there are no short-cuts in college. Plus, using ADHD prescription stimulant medication to help cram for exams is counterproductive in the long run. You've made it this far through school without it. You've got this.

MISUSE PUTS YOUR HEALTH AT RISK

Like all prescription medications, ADHD stimulants come with potential side effects and should only be used under medical supervision. In addition to abuse, risks of stimulant medications include dependence, cardiovascular and psychiatric side effects among others and may interact with your prescription and over the counter medicines. Talk to your doctor. Overdosing or mixing with over-the-counter medicines or alcohol can be potentially fatal. And relying on ADHD prescription stimulant medications to "manage" the stress of college can result in a pattern of misuse.^{2,3}

PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

If stimulants are abused chronically, they can be addictive and associated with withdrawal symptoms. Fatigue, depression, and disturbed sleep patterns can result when a person stops taking them.⁴

YOU COULD FACE LEGAL & ACADEMIC CONSEQUENCES

It's a felony to share, sell or misuse a Schedule II prescription drug, like ADHD stimulant medication.⁵ Plus some universities consider ADHD prescription stimulant medication misuse cheating, which can lead to academic probation or expulsion.⁶

EVERYONE IS NOT DOING IT.

ADHD prescription stimulant misuse isn't the norm. In 2017, less than one in ten college students reported using a prescription stimulant for nonmedical use in the past year.⁷

1. Source: McCabe SE, Knight JR, Teter CJ, Wechsler H. Non-medical use of prescription stimulants among US college students: prevalence and correlates from a national survey. *Addiction*. 2005;100(1):96-106.
2. Source: Commonly abused drugs charts. NIDA: National Institute on Drug Abuse website. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/commonly-abused-drugs-charts>. Published January 2016. Updated August 2016. Accessed February 13, 2017.
3. Source: Fact sheet: preventing teen prescription medicine abuse. The Medicine Abuse Project of The Partnership at Drugfree.org website. http://medicineabuseproject.org/images/uploads/misc/fact_sheet.pdf. Published 2012. Accessed February 13, 2017.
4. Source: Stimulant ADHD medications: methylphenidate and amphetamines. NIDA: National Institute on Drug Abuse website. <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/stimulant-adhd-medications-methylphenidate-amphetamines>. Updated January, 2014. Accessed February 13, 2017.
5. Source: Federal trafficking penalties. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) website. <http://www.dea.gov/druginfo/ftp3.shtml>. Accessed February 13, 2017.
6. Source: Carroll L. Conduct policy changes reflect drug abuse. *The Chronicle*. September 6, 2011. <http://www.dukechronicle.com/articles/2011/09/06/conduct-policy-changes-reflect-drug-abuse>. Published September 6, 2011. Accessed September 12, 2016.
7. Source: Johnston, L.D., Miech, R.A., O'Malley, P.M., Bachman, J.G., Schulenberg, J.E., & Patrick, M.E. (2018). Demographic subgroup trends among young adults in the use of various licit and illicit drugs, 1975-2017 (Monitoring the Future Occasional Paper No. 91). Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. 2018.