

How can I tell if my teen is abusing these drugs?

Some signs that your teen might be using prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs include constricted pupils, slurred speech, or flushed skin. Other signs and symptoms may vary, but parents should be alert to the following: personality changes, mood swings, irritability, excessive energy, sleepiness or avoiding sleep, sweating, loss of appetite, forgetfulness, or clumsiness.

Other signs might include secretiveness, loss of interest in personal appearance, borrowing money or having extra cash, skipping classes, or not doing well in school.

Watch for signs around the house such as missing pills, unfamiliar pills, or empty cough and cold medicine bottles or packages. If your teen has a prescription, keep control of the bottle. Be alert to your teen running out of pills quickly, losing pills, or requesting refills.

What are the brand names of some of these drugs?

Painkillers

- Vicodin, Tylenol with Codeine, OxyContin, Percocet

Depressants

- Klonopin, Nembutal, Soma, Valium, Xanax

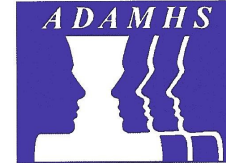
Stimulants

- Adderall, Concerta, Dexedrine, Ritalin

OTCs

- Coricidin HBP Cough and Cold, Robitussin, Vicks Formula 44 Cough Relief and similar medications

Nationally, **70%** of adolescents obtained prescription drugs from a friend or relative.



Hancock County Opiate/Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force

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**For more information about prevention and treatment of prescription drug abuse please contact the Hancock County ADAMHS Board.
419-424-1985**

Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Abuse

Parents and Caregivers are the first line of defense.



What's the problem?

Did you know it is ILLEGAL to share any prescription drug with another person?

Drug screens that indicate use of a non-prescribed prescription drug may result in serious negative consequences.

Teens are abusing some prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs to get high. This includes painkillers, such as those drugs prescribed after surgery; depressants, such as sleeping pills or anti-anxiety drugs; and stimulants, such as those drugs prescribed for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Teens are also abusing over-the-counter drugs, such as cough and cold remedies.

Every day, 2,500 youth age 12-17 abuse a pain reliever for the very first time. More teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana. In 2006, more than 2.1 million teens ages 12 to 17 reported abusing prescription drugs. Among 12- and 13-year-olds, prescription drugs are their drug of choice.

Because these drugs are so readily available, and believed to be safe, teens who wouldn't otherwise touch illicit drugs might abuse prescription drugs. **Teens report that parental disapproval is a powerful way to keep them away from drugs.**

Prescription painkillers are very similar to HEROIN. Evidence has shown that individuals who abuse prescription painkillers often turn to using HEROIN when they can no longer obtain prescription painkillers.

Is my teen at risk?

Prescription drug misuse in Hancock County

11% of Hancock County residents ages 18-25 who indicated misuse of prescription drugs, indicated they were **13 years-old when they began abusing prescription drugs.**

The *main reason* for abusing prescription drugs reported by Hancock County residents ages 18-25 was to **get high.**

Where do Hancock County adolescents get prescription drugs?

26% - Family Members

21% - Friends

19% - Stealing

16% - Purchase on Internet

18% - Other Means

Source: 2011 Hancock County Community Health Assessment, 2011; HCPDATF Survey of 18-25 Year Olds in Hancock County, 2012

Help us keep prescription drug and OTC medication misuse out of Hancock County schools.

What are the dangers?

There are serious health risks. A single large dose of prescription or over-the-counter painkillers or depressants can cause breathing difficulty that can lead to death. Stimulant abuse can lead to hostility or paranoia, or the potential for heart system failure or fatal seizures. Even in small doses, depressants and painkillers have subtle effects on motor skills, judgment, and ability to learn, which can increase the risk of injury.

The abuse of over-the-counter cough and cold remedies can cause blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, coma, and even death.

Many teens report mixing prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs and alcohol. Using these drugs in combination can cause respiratory failure and death.

Many of these drugs can be addictive. Between 1995 and 2005, the number of treatment admissions for prescription painkillers increased by more than 300 percent. Teens who first abuse prescription drugs before age 16 also have greater risk of drug dependence later in life.

What can I do about this problem?

Think about your home. What prescription and over-the-counter drugs do you have? Where are they kept? Would you know if some were missing? The good news is that you can take steps immediately to limit access to these drugs and help keep your teen drug-free:

1. Safeguard all drugs at home. Monitor quantities and control access.
2. Set clear rules for teens about all drug use, including not sharing medicine and always following the medical provider's advice and dosages.
3. Be a good role model by following these same rules with your own medicines.
4. Properly dispose of unused/unneeded medications. Utilize the permanent drop-off medication disposal boxes located at the Hancock County Sheriff's Office or the Findlay Police Department.
5. Ask friends and family to safeguard their prescription drugs as well.

Talk with your teen about the dangers of prescription and over-the-counter drugs. These are powerful drugs that, when misused, are just as dangerous as illegal street drugs. Let your teen know it is not worth the risk.

If you need help, please call the Emergency Hotline: 1-888-936-7116