

How to Use This Document

The lessons and materials in this prevention unit are designed to be used together and in order.

Lessons: Each lesson contains ice breakers, an article explaining each health topic, a review for students to strengthen their understanding, and a slide for parents.

Materials: The materials provided in each lesson are designed to reinforce the main idea of each topic. These materials can be used in a whole class setting, in small groups, or individually.

Parent Post: Each lesson has a Parent Post created to keep grown-ups at home involved in what their student is learning! The posts include key topics and vocabulary that was used.

Connecticut State Standards

Standards: Healthy & Balanced Living Curriculum Framework Health Education & Physical Education

- ANOD 1.1.12 Differentiate between proper use and abuse of over-the counter (OTC) and prescription medicines.
- ANOD 1.2.12 Examine situations that could lead to the use of alcohol and other drugs.
- ANOD 1.4.12 Summarize family rules, school rules, and laws about alcohol, nicotine, and other drug-use.
- ANOD 1.5.12 Compare the relationship between ANOD use and other risks, such as unintentional injuries, violence, suicide, sexual risk behaviors, decreased school and job performance, school and job absenteeism, and job loss.
- ANOD 1.7.12 Identify treatments for addiction to ANOD.
- ANOD 1.8.12 Examine the ripple effects (e.g., financial, social, emotional, physical) costs of ANOD's use to the individual and society.

What Are Prescription Stimulants?

Would You Rather



OR



**Live in an amusement
park**

Live in a zoo

Would You Rather



OR



**Learn that mermaids
exist**

Learn that dragons exist

What do we know about prescription stimulants?

What are prescription drugs?
What are stimulants? Are these legal?

What are the dangers involved with using any prescription drugs?

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Prescription Stimulants are...

HEADS UP | REAL NEWS ABOUT DRUGS AND YOUR BODY



What You
Need to Know About...

PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS

When taken as prescribed, these medications can safely and effectively treat ADHD. But misusing them has serious health risks, including addiction.

You've probably heard of medications like Ritalin or Adderall. These drugs are **prescription stimulants** and must be prescribed by a doctor. They are used to treat **attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**. ADHD is usually diagnosed

A message from Scholastic and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

From Scholastic and the National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Read, "What You Need to Know About... Prescription Stimulants", focus and take notes on:

- What are prescription stimulants?
- Why are people prescribed stimulants?
- Are there any dangers involved in using prescription stimulants?

What Are Prescription Stimulants?

Prescription stimulants are medications prescribed by a healthcare provider to treat certain conditions.

These medications work by affecting brain chemicals that help with focus, attention, and impulse control.

What Are Prescription Stimulants?

Healthcare providers commonly prescribe stimulants to treat certain conditions, most commonly:

- **ADHD** (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)
- **Narcolepsy**

Common prescription stimulants include medications that contain:

- **Amphetamines** (e.g., Adderall)
- **Methylphenidate** (e.g., Ritalin)



Who Should Use Prescription Stimulants?

Prescription stimulants are safe and effective when they are used as prescribed by a doctor!

They are not appropriate or safe for everyone!

A prescription is based on a medical diagnosis and monitoring by a healthcare provider. Many patients need different trials to determine the correct dosage.

Proper Use Vs. Misuse

Proper Use:

- Taking the medication as prescribed
- Correct dose, time and purpose
- Only by the person it was prescribed for

Misuse:

- Taking someone else's stimulant
- Taking a higher dose or using it more frequently
- Crushing or snorting pills
- Mixing stimulants with alcohol or other drugs

Health Risks

Misusing prescription stimulants can be dangerous even if the drug is prescribed to someone else. It can cause:

- Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Anxiety, panic attacks, or paranoia
- Sleep problems
- Loss of appetite and weight loss
- Risk of addiction and dependence
- Increased risk of heart problems or overdose, especially at high doses or when mixed with other substances

Legal & School Consequences

Using a stimulant without a prescription is considered a misuse and illegal.

Prescription stimulants are classified as **Schedule II controlled substances** under **U.S. Federal Law**.

In all states, it is illegal to:

Take a stimulant that was not prescribed to you

Possess a prescription stimulant without a valid prescription

Share or give your medication to someone else

Sell prescription stimulants

Legal & School Consequences

Prescription stimulants are classified as **controlled substances** under federal law.

Possession without a prescription can result in:

- School discipline
- Legal consequences
- Long-term impacts on college or career opportunities



Why Teens Misuse Stimulants

There are common reasons that teenagers misuse stimulants, including:

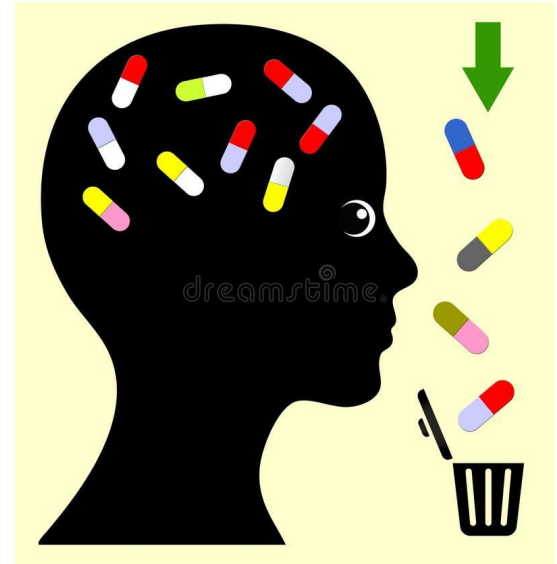
- Academic pressure or fear of falling behind
- Belief that stimulants are “study drugs”
- Peer influence or easy access
- Misunderstanding the risks

Recognizing these pressures can help make teenagers make safer choices!

Warning Signs

Some warning signs include:

- Extreme energy followed by crashes
- Irritability or mood swings
- Sleep deprivation
- Obsessive studying or pill seeking behavior
- Hiding medication use



Getting Help

Misuse and addiction are **medical issues**.

Getting help **early** can **reduce risks** and **support recovery!**

- Trusted adults, including:
 - School counselors/nurses
 - Healthcare providers
 - Confidential helplines



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Let's Review!

What are prescription stimulants? What are some examples?

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What can you do if you notice a friend is misusing prescription stimulants?

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Parents!

- **Adolescence is a critical period for brain development, and alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs can interfere with learning, judgement and emotional regulation!**
- **Prescription medications are only safe when used as prescribed and should never be shared with others!**
- **Increased academic, social, and emotional pressures in high school can raise the risk of substance misuse.**
- **Ongoing and open conversations about expectations, risks and decision-making are more effective than one-time talks.**
- **Warning signs of misuse may include changes in mood, sleep, grades, behavior, or peer groups.**
- **Getting help early can help prevent problems from becoming more serious and supports healthier outcomes for teens and families!**