

# Prescription Drugs

## What are they?

Prescription drugs are FDA regulated medicines that are prescribed to a patient by a doctor to manage pain, treat or cure a health condition.

## Dangers

Taking prescription drugs that are not prescribed to you- or taking them in any other way than directed by a doctor- is considered non medical use or abuse and can be dangerous as taking an illegal drug such as heroin or cocaine.

Taking prescription drugs without a prescription, not taking them as directed, or mixing them with alcohol are all unsafe and potentially dangerous. Misuse and abuse can lead to severe health consequences and addiction.

## Misuse/abuse

'Misuse' of a prescription drug is taking it to treat a medical condition but not as directed by a doctor or packaging.

- taking a larger dose than prescribed
- taking it more often that directed
- using it in a way that is not intended

'Abuse' is taking a prescription drug with the sole intention of getting high.

## It's Illegal

Getting prescription drugs without a prescription, called 'diversion,' is illegal and may put you at risk for arrest and prosecution. Regardless of how you acquire a prescription medication, using these types of drugs without a valid prescription- written for you- is unsafe and illegal.

*As cited by: Food and Drug Administration  
& NIDA*

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