

Street Smart: Prescription and Over the Counter Drugs

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“NMDU”

Non-Medical Drug Use

Definition:

The use of legal medications to achieve an effect other than the intended legitimate purpose of the medication.

Examples:

Over the Counter Medications (OTC)

Prescriptive Medications (Rx)

Who?

1998 - 1.6 Million Americans used prescription pain relievers non-medically (for the first time)

2001 - 6.9% of college students report using non-medical prescription stimulants (McCabe, et. al, 2005)

2005 - 32.7 million Americans had used pain relievers non-medically (Office of Applied Studies of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

2005 - 10% of 7-12th grade students use cough medicines to get high (Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2006)

Who?

2006 - 7 Million Americans used prescription pain relievers non-medically
(National Survey of Drug Use and Health, 2006)

2007 – Monitoring the Future Survey found
9.6% of 12th graders used Vicodin
5.2% of 12th graders used Oxycontin
3.8% of 12th graders used Ritalin
All non-medically prescribed (University of Michigan, 2007)

Who?

Percentage of students that used the following drugs that were not prescribed to them in the last 12 months:

- Antidepressants 3%
- Erectile Dysfunction 1%
- Pain Medication 9%
- Sedatives 5%
- Stimulants 7%

(American College Health Association – National College Health Assessment, Spring 2010)

Why?



- **Cost**
 - ❖ Less than illicit drugs
- **Access**
 - ❖ Easy to obtain
- **Perceived Safety**
 - ❖ FDA approved
- **Possession**
 - ❖ Not illegal (in some cases) or checked
- **Effects**
 - ❖ Achieve desired impact with less effort

How?

A hand holding a pill is visible in the top right corner. A white marker is on the left side, pointing towards the text. The background is a light blue and green gradient.

- **Swallow the pill**
- **Crush the pill & snort**
- **Swallow liquid**
- **Drain capsules / pin pricks**
- **Mixers**

Study Drugs...

Some students are using “NMDU” as a way to focus on staying awake/alert during academically stressful times

☀ Repeated studies have found that the use of these drugs does not improve academic outcomes

☀ In fact some have lower grades

Here are some of the more common study drugs...

Rx

Adderall

(Dextroamphetamine & Amphetamine)

What It Does

CNS Stimulant

Activates nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord to increase motor activity and alertness

Use

Treat ADHD and Narcolepsy

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Tricyclic Antidepressants, Caffeine, CNS Stimulants, MAO Inhibitors, Thyroid Hormones, Citrus Juices

Effects

Restlessness, loss of appetite, insomnia, mood changes, poor sex drive / erections

Rx

Ritalin

(Methylphenidate Hydrochloride)

What It Does

CNS Stimulant

Stimulates the release of norepinephrine to promote transmission of nerve impulses in the brain

Use

Treat ADHD or Narcolepsy

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Caffeine, Tricyclic Antidepressants, Asthma Meds, Amphetamines, Common Allergy, Cold or Flu Meds

Effects

Excitation, loss of appetite, insomnia, nervous, convulsion (if seizure prone), confusion, twitch, tremble, agitation

OTC

Sudafed

(Pseudoephedrine)

What It Does

Decongestant

Narrows and constricts blood vessels to reduce blood flow to swollen nasal tissues

Use

Treat nasal or sinus congestion

Mixing Problems

Cocaine, MAO Inhibitors, Beta-Blockers

Effects

Restlessness, insomnia, hallucinations, dizziness

Better than Alcohol!

For some students it is easier to get, and thought to be “safer” to use, Rx meds than to use alcohol.

Here are some common meds know to be used to get “high”...

Rx

Oxycontin

(Oxycondone Hydrochloride)

What It Does

Opioid

Acts on areas in the spinal cord and brain that process pain signals from nerves

Use

Treat moderate to severe pain

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Barbiturates, Sedatives, Cough Meds, Decongestants, Antidepressants, Rifampin, Zidovudine, Other Pain Meds

Effects

Drunk-like, drowsy, confused, slurred speech, seizures, dizzy, urinary retention

Rx

Valium (Diazepam)

What It Does

Benzodiazepine

Enhances the effect of Gamma Amino Butyric Acid (GABA) which inhibits neuron activity and dampens nerve signals

Use

Treat Anxiety, Panic Attacks, Muscle Spasm, Acute Seizures

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Antihistamines, Antidepressants, Barbiturates, Sedatives, Cough Meds, Decongestants, Pain Killers

Effects

Drunk like, drowsy, loss of coordination, dizziness, loss of balance, euphoria, hallucinations, memory impairment, difficulty concentrating

Rx

Vicodin

(Hydrocodone Bitartrate+Acetaminophen)

What It Does

Opioid analgesic
Blocks pain signals to
spinal cord and brain

Use

Treat moderate to severe
pain

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Barbiturates,
Sedatives, Additional
Acetaminophen, Seizure
Meds, Muscle Relaxants,
Anesthetics, Tranquilizers

Effects

Sedation, drunk like
effects, drowsiness,
euphoria, hallucinations,
dizziness, lightheaded,
blurring of vision,
confusion, weakness

Rx

Xanax (Alprazolam)

What It Does

Benzodiazepine
Enhances the effect of
Gamma Amino Butyric Acid
(GABA) which inhibits
neuron activity and dampens
nerve signals

Use

Treat anxiety and panic
disorders

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, CNS Depressants,
Antihistamines,
Antidepressants,
Barbiturates, Sedatives,
Cough Meds,
Decongestants

Effects

Sedation, drunk like effects,
drowsiness, loss of
coordination and balance,
slurred speech, euphoria,
fatigue, hallucinations,
memory impairment

Rx

Zoloft

(Sertraline Hydrochloride)

What It Does

Selective Serotonin
Reuptake Inhibitor (SSRI)
Enhances the brain
chemical levels of
Serotonin

Use

Treat Major Depression,
Obsessive Compulsive
Disorder, Panic Disorder

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, MAO Inhibitors,
Tricyclic Antidepressants,
Oral Antibiotics,
Antihistamines,
Barbiturates, Sedatives,
Cough Meds,
Decongestants

Effects

Relaxed pleasant state,
loss of initiative, decrease
in appetite, weight loss,
insomnia, agitation,
anxiety

I can see flavours and taste numbers...

For some students hallucinations are a desirable way to avoid the stress and realities of college life.

Here is the most commonly reported hallucinogen “NMDU” medication.

**OTC &
Rx**

Dextromethorphan (DM/DXM)

What It Does

Cough Suppressant
Reduces the sensitivity
of the cough center in
the brain

Use

Treat dry or minimally
productive cough (esp...
when interferes with
sleep or daily activity)

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Sedatives,
Depressants, MAO
Inhibitors

Effects

Hallucinations, blurred
vision, confusion,
drowsiness, dizziness

I wanna sex you up...

The use of “NMDU” related to sexual health is not well studied. Reports primarily exist for the improper use of ED medications.

This behavior is sometimes seen in “pranks” or out of misguided efforts to prove masculine stereotypes.

Rx

Cialis (tadalafil)

What It Does

Impotence Agent
phosphodiesterase (PDE)
inhibitors to stimulate
blood flow to erectile
tissues in the penis

Use

Treat erectile dysfunction

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Nitrates,
fluconazole, Erythromycin,
most HIV medications,
Zoloft, many HBP
medications

Effects

Prolonged erection >4
hours, headache, cardiac
risk, vision problems

Rx

Levitra (vardenafil)

What It Does

Impotence Agent
phosphodiesterase (PDE)
inhibitors to stimulate
blood flow to erectile
tissues in the penis

Use

Treat erectile dysfunction

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Nitrates, Anti-
fungals, Erythromycin, most
HIV medications, Zoloft,
many HBP medications

Effects

Prolonged erection >4
hours, headache, cardiac
risk, vision problems

Rx

Viagra

(Sildenafil Citrate)

What It Does

Impotence Agent
Encourages action of Nitric Oxide (NO) to stimulate blood flow to erectile tissues in the penis

Use

Treat erectile dysfunction

Mixing Problems

Alcohol, Organic Nitrates, Erythromycin, Antihistamines

Effects

Prolonged erection >4 hours, headache, cardiac risk, visual disturbance (colours)

Now What...

Partners in Prevention

Campus Health Center
Campus Stores
Local Hospitals

Reporting

Missing Medication
Campus/Community
Data

Media

Don't Over Hype
the Problem

Education

Teach instead of
Preach

Key Points!

- Most students will NOT engage in NMDU behaviors
- Teaching about this issue can introduce the what, why, how ideas
- “Study drugs” do NOT improve academic performance
- Prevention is critical!

A hand holding a white marker on a green chalkboard. The background is a light blue gradient with a faint image of a hand holding a pen.

Your Turn...

Questions?

Comments?

Cares?

Concerns?

Contact Me...

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