

TEENS AND STIMULANTS

Common questions. Simple answers.

WHAT ARE PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS?

- Prescription stimulants are prescribed to treat ADHD, serious sleep problems, and other health conditions.
- They increase alertness, attention, and concentration.
- They're pills, but many people who abuse them crush them up so that they can smoke, snort, or inject them.
- Teens abuse them for fun and/or to try to improve school performance.

HOW DO TEENS ACQUIRE PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS?

- According to the Partnership of Drug-Free Kids, one in five youth take pills not prescribed to them. They often get these stimulants from family and friends, including taking them from their home's medicine cabinets. This shows how important it is to safeguard medicine in the home.
- Safe storage and disposal of medications diminishes opportunities for easy access.

WHAT PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS ARE TEENS USING?

- Stimulants can be prescribed to treat specific issues such as ADHD, depression, and narcolepsy. However, they can easily be misused or abused.
- Some of the most common prescription stimulants are Dexedrine®, Adderall®, Ritalin®, and Concerta®.
- Some common street names for stimulants, depending on the brand or chemical, are bennies, dexies, pep pills, speed, black beauties, uppers, red dexies, red pep, blue pill, wakeups, lid poppers, truck drivers, rids, ritties, R pop, vitamin R, R-ball, study buddies, and smarties.



WHY ARE *TEENS* USING PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS?

- One in four teenagers believes prescription drugs can be used as a study aid, and nearly one-third of parents say they believe that attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication can improve a child's academic or testing performance, even if that child does not have ADHD. Families, parents, guardians, children, and prescribers must be educated on the impact of prescription drugs on the developing brain.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF STIMULANTS ON THE *BRAIN AND BODY*?

THE BRAIN



- When taken in a way not prescribed, stimulants can cause abnormally high levels of dopamine, which causes a “high” and increases the risk of addiction.
- They can cause increased alertness, attention, and energy

THE BODY



Prescription stimulants can cause the following side effects, even when used as directed:

- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Possible increased levels of the brain chemical norepinephrine, causing increases in blood pressure, breathing, and heart rate
- Rapid breathing

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF STIMULANTS?

Short Term

- Alertness
- Attention
- Focus
- Energy
- A general “high” feeling
- Psychosis, anger, and paranoia when abused

Long Term

- Psychosis
- Anger
- Paranoia
- Heart, nerve, and stomach problems
- Substance use disorder or addiction
- Withdrawal fatigue, depression, or sleep problems
- Risk of overdose
- Risk of legal trouble if used without a prescription

NOW I'VE GOT THE FACTS — *WHAT'S NEXT?*

You can visit talk2kidsaboutdrugs.com for trusted, factual information for families and educators.

