A Guide to Proper Use of Prescription Stimulant Medication

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What You Should Know About Proper & Improper Stimulant Use

It is essential to use prescription stimulant drugs exactly as prescribed by a doctor or healthcare provider. Medications like amphetamine and methylphenidate, which are classified as CII controlled substances by the FDA, require careful handling due to their elevated potential for misuse, abuse, and addiction.

Improper usage and/or illegal consumption of prescription stimulants can result in the development of stimulant use disorder. Stimulant use disorder refers to a recurring pattern of stimulant drug use that leads to notable clinical impairment or distress. This condition can lead to severe health complications, including psychiatric issues, seizures, unconsciousness, and even fatality.

Prescription stimulants should never be used without a prescription. Here are some suggestions on how to encourage proper use.

Prasco is committed to working with healthcare professionals and patients to help ensure the proper use of stimulant medications. We are committed to providing materials that help educate and promote the appropriate use of stimulant medications.

Warnings to Improve Safe Use of Stimulants[1]

Always take your prescription stimulant exactly as prescribed by your healthcare professional.

Do not take more of the medicine or take it more often than prescribed.

Never provide any of your prescription stimulant medicine to anyone else as it can have serious risks for those for whom it was not prescribed.

Store your prescription stimulant medicines securely, out of sight and reach of children and in a location not accessible by others, including visitors to the home.

Immediately dispose of unused or expired prescription stimulants properly or take them to a drug take-back site, location, or program.

Warnings to Improve Safe Use of Stimulants[1] (cont.)

Talk to your healthcare professional if your use of prescription stimulants has resulted in problems with your health, relationships, responsibilities, or the law, or if you are struggling with misusing these or other medicines.

Go to an emergency room or call 911 if you experience symptoms of stimulant overdose, including new tremors or change in existing tremors, seizures, restless or aggressive behavior, overactive reflexes, fast breathing, fast or irregular pulse rate, confusion, stomach cramps, or more serious symptoms such as heart attack or stroke.

Talk to your healthcare professional if you have questions or concerns about risks of taking prescription stimulants.

Reference: 1. US Food and Drug Administration. Drug Safety Communication, 2023. https://www.fda.gov/safety/medical-product-safety-information/fda-updating-warnings-improve-safe-use-prescription-stimulants-used-treat-adhd-and-other-conditions. Accessed October 9, 2023.

It is critical to strictly adhere to a healthcare provider's instructions when using prescription medications. Any deviation from the prescribed usage of a medication is not only hazardous but also constitutes a violation of the law.

The FDA is committed to reducing stigma, expanding therapeutic options, and ensuring access to evidence-based treatment for individuals with substance use disorders. FDA provides the following common terms used to describe improper stimulant use.[2]

Glossary of Terms

MISUSE

The intentional use, for therapeutic purposes, of a drug in a manner other than as prescribed or by an individual for whom it was not prescribed.

ABUSE

The intentional, non-therapeutic use of a drug for its desirable psychological effects. The term is used to describe a specific behavior that confers a risk of adverse health outcomes; it is not intended to imply moral judgment.

DIVERSION

Diversion occurs when someone other than the person whose name is on the prescription uses it.

Reference: 2. US Food and Drug Administration. Drug Safety Communication, 2023. https://www.fda.gov/safety/medical-product-safety-information/fda-updating-warnings-improve-safe-use-prescription-stimulants-used-treat-adhd-and-other-conditions. Accessed October 26, 2023.

Available Resources

Prasco is committed to working with healthcare professionals and patients to help ensure the proper use of stimulant medications. We are committed to providing materials that help educate and promote the appropriate use of stimulant medications. Visit the below organizations for more information:

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
nimh.nih.gov

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
nida.nih.gov

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
dea.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
samhsa.gov

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