

Sharing Stimulants

The use of non-medical prescription stimulants (NPS), is a growing concern on college campuses. It is imperative to be aware of the prevalence, risks, and factors associated with this issue to make informed decisions about your health and well-being. Recent studies indicate NPS use on U.S. college campuses range from 6.9% to 34% at a large public university. This highlights a notable portion of college students engage in this behavior, with misuse being higher among those who are male, white, members of fraternities and sororities, and those with lower grade point averages.

Students report using NPSs primarily for academic enhancement rather than recreation. Motivations may include: expectations of improved productivity, peer approval, and financial gain. However, misusing stimulants can lead to a range of negative mental, physical, and legal consequences. Incidentally, studies indicate college students who abstain from NPS use are more likely to increase GPAs than those who actively use.

✦ NPS News

- Sharing prescription stimulants, such as Adderall or Ritalin, is illegal and can have major consequences.
- Over one-third (35.8%) of college students with a prescription have diverted their medication at least once.
- ADHD medications are the most commonly diverted, with a diversion rate of 61.7%.
- Sharing is the most common method of diversion.

Dangers of NPS Use

- **Loss of appetite:** Stimulants can suppress appetite, which may lead to unhealthy weight loss or nutritional deficiencies.
- **Increased impulsivity:** Stimulant misuse can increase impulsive behaviors, potentially leading to poor decision-making, and risky actions including alcohol poisoning.
- **Potential for addiction:** Non-medical use carries a risk of developing dependence or addiction to the stimulant.
- **Cardiovascular issues:** Stimulants can increase heart rate and blood pressure, creating risks for individuals with underlying heart conditions.
- **Psychiatric problems:** Stimulant misuse can exacerbate or trigger anxiety, depression, or psychosis.
- **Adverse side effects:** NPSs may cause allergic reactions, or dangerous interactions with other medications, drugs or alcohol. Increased risk of overdose or complications from a high dose.

◆ Articles

- NONPRESCRIPTION STIMULANT USE AT A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY: STUDENTS' MOTIVES, EXPERIENCES, AND GUILT



- THE MAKING OF AN ADDICTION: EXAMINING PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF PRESCRIPTION STIMULANT ABUSE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS



- PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO MISUSE STIMULANTS VERSUS OTHER DRUGS



◆ Benefits of Not Using NPSs

- Reduced risk of addiction.
- Lowered risk of substance misuse of alcohol and other drugs.
- Better judgment and decision-making.
- Improved sleep quality.
- Healthier appetite.
- Financial savings.
- Reduced anxiety and improved mental health.
- Lower risk of cardiovascular issues.
- Enhanced academic performance.
- Avoiding legal or conduct consequences.

UNIVERSITY POLICY PROHIBITS MISUSE, SALE, OR USE OF ANOTHER STUDENT'S PRESCRIPTION DRUGS



RESOURCES AT USM

If you or someone you know is struggling with their mental health and/or substance use, here are some on-campus resources:

Screen U - An anonymous, confidential, and free screening to help you understand your level of risk – available on USM's Counseling Services website.

USM Counseling Services - Schedule an appointment with a counselor or sign up for a **BASICS** session (Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students).

The ROCC (Recovery-Oriented Campus Center) - A collegiate recovery program which assists and inspires student success via academic pursuits and personal journey.

FOR COMMENTS ON THIS NEWSLETTER OR SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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