

What are the risks?

The risks are endless when prescribed medication is not taken as prescribed due to side-effects. Here are the most common;

Psychological:

- Confusion
- Anxiety
- Paranoia
- Poor coordination
- Agitation
- Dependency and addiction
- Lack of concentration
- Mood changes
- Hostile
- Short tempered

Physical:

- Interaction with other prescribed medication
- Drowsiness
- High blood pressure
- Irregular heartbeat
- Insomnia
- Slurred speech
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Dizziness
- Physical withdrawal symptoms
- Lack of or increased sleep
- Overdose
- Diarrhoea

Did you know?

50% of women and 43% of men, report taking a prescribed medication at least once a week.

Prescribed medication and the law

Prescription-only medicines are the most restricted type of medication. They can only be sold or supplied by a pharmacist if prescribed by a doctor or other qualified prescriber.

It is an offence for anyone who is in receipt of a controlled substance to either re-sell or give their medication to anyone else.

It is also an offence to drive if you have had over the specified limits of certain drugs and if you haven't been prescribed them.

Prescribed drugs can be class A, B or C depending on the medication.

Find out more

If you would like more information or support on prescribed medication or you are affected by someone else's use please contact us at Inclusion Recovery Hampshire.

Information is also available at:

NHS Website: www.nhs.uk

Talk to Frank Website: www.talktofrank.com

HOW TO CONTACT US

NORTH: 01782 639856
StarsNorth@mpft.nhs.uk

EAST: 01283 741053
StarsEast@mpft.nhs.uk

WEST: 01785 270080
StarsWest@mpft.nhs.uk

Or visit: www.staffstars.org

You. Me. Us

This leaflet was created by: **NHS inclusion** Part of Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust Find out more at www.inclusion.org

Prescribed medication What you need to know!



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What is a prescription drug?

A prescription drug (also prescribed medication) is a pharmaceutical drug.

- It requires a prescription to be dispensed.
- In contrast, over-the-counter drugs can be obtained without a prescription.
- They are commonly abused (taken differently to the prescribers instructions).

The myths

- It's ok to take medication from someone else, if it has been prescribed by a GP

The person giving you the medication is committing an offence by giving you their medication and you do not have the correct training to know whether the medication is the right dose or strength for you.

How are prescription drugs taken?

Your prescriber will explain to you how and when to take the medication that they are prescribing. It is very important that you follow these guidelines. If you're not sure if you heard the directive right, don't hesitate to ask the GP to explain it again.

If you don't take the medication as intended by your doctor it could lead to your symptoms not getting any better, negative side effects, overdose, and in some cases death.

Misuse of prescription drugs means taking a medication in a manner or dose other than prescribed; taking someone else's prescription, even if for a legitimate medical reason.

Misusing your medication also applies to you if you take a medication to feel euphoria (get high).

What does it look like?

Prescribed drugs will look no different than over the counter medication. The packaging will be different, as they are not boxed in a way to attract your attention to buy it.

Prescribed drugs can come in many forms:

- Tablets
- Liquids
- Soluble
- Creams
- Patches
- Sprays
- Oils

The main difference you may find between prescribed medication and over the counter is the strength of the medication (prescribed medication is often much stronger).

The three most commonly misused medications are:

- **Opioids** - used to treat pain
- **Central nervous depressants** - used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders
- **Stimulants** - used to treat disorders such as ADHD
- **Gabapentoids** - used to treat pain and anxiety

What are the effects?

The effects of using prescribed drugs are positive, if you use them according to the guidelines provided with the medication.

If you take the medication in the way prescribed they can;

- Manage pain
- Clear rashes
- Remove headaches
- Reduce or stop allergy symptoms
- Digestion relief
- Cold and Flu relief
- And many more

Some people abuse prescribed medication to self-medicate for pain relief, help with sleeping or mental illness like anxiety and depression. Abusing these medications can also give users a euphoric 'high' or hallucinations. Any use outside of what is recommended on the label is considered abuse.

