

**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS YOUTH**



**Know the Signs and Symptoms of Medicine Abuse**

The best way to prevent prescription drug abuse is to learn about the issue. That way, you can effectively present the facts when talking to your teen.

# Recognize the signs of prescription drug abuse:

* Fatigue, red or glazed eyes, and repeated health complaints
* Sudden mood changes, including irritability, negative attitude, personality changes, and general lack of interest in hobbies/activities
* Secretiveness and withdrawing from family
* Decreased or obsessive interest in school work
* Missing prescription medicines from your medicine cabinet
* Additional filled prescriptions on your pharmacy record that you did not order

*The signs and symptoms of prescription medicine abuse depend on the particular drug. Because of their mind-altering properties, the most commonly abused prescription drugs are: opioid painkillers, anti-anxiety medications/sedatives, and stimulants.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pain Reliever Abuse**  **(Opioid painkillers- used to treat pain)** | **Depressant Abuse (Anti-anxiety medication and sedatives)** | **Stimulant Abuse (Used to treat ADHD and certain sleep disorders)** |
| Depression Low blood pressure  Decreased breathing rate  Confusion Sweating Constricted pupils | Drowsiness Confusion Poor judgment Dizziness Slurred speech  Respiratory depression | Weight loss, Agitation, Irritability, Insomnia, High blood pressure, Irregular heartbeat, Anxiety,  Impulsive behavior |

**When to see a doctor:** Talk to your doctor if you think you or someone you know may have a problem with prescription drug use. You may feel embarrassed to talk to your doctor about it — but remember that medical professionals are trained to help you, not judge you. Identifying prescription drug abuse as soon as possible is important. It's easier to tackle the problem early before it becomes an addiction and leads to more serious problems.

# Feeling overwhelmed with your child's drug problem?

**Call our Parents Toll-Free Helpline 1-855-DRUGFREE (1-855-378-4373)**

For more information about prescription medicine abuse visit The Medicine Abuse Project at **MedicineAbuseProject.org**