

“Out Of Reach” Tools to Take Action
and #EndMedicineAbuse

Action 2: Know the Signs and Symptoms of Medicine Abuse

The best way to prevent prescription drug abuse is to learn about the issue.

Recognize the signs of prescription drug abuse:

- ✓ Fatigue, red or glazed eyes, 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)

Take The Pledge to #EndMedicineAbuse.
Learn more at drugfree.org/MedicineAbuseProject