

# Adolescent Prescription and Over-the-counter Drug Abuse

The Truth About Abusing Over-the-counter and Prescription Medications

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After marijuana and alcohol, prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are the **most commonly abused** substances by Americans 14 and older. 1,756 teens abuse a prescription drug for the first time every day.

## What is Prescription/OTC Drug Abuse?

- \* Taking a prescription/OTC drug not prescribed to you
- \* Taking it in a way other than prescribed (larger dose)
- \* Taking it for another purpose than prescribed (to "get high")
- \* Mixing a prescription/OTC drug with other drugs (alcohol)

**Myth:** Taking an extra pill from my prescription or giving one to my friend is not harmful because a doctor prescribed it.

**Fact:** Taking drugs that are not prescribed or taking them in any way other than a doctor directs can be dangerous.

**Using another person's medication or sharing your medication is against the law.** – N.D. Century Code 19-03. 1-23.

**Myth:** Prescription and OTC drugs are safer than illegal drugs.

**Fact:** Prescription and OTC drugs can be **more addictive and dangerous** than illegal drugs. Users are at risk for adverse health effects and overdose. **Legal does not mean safe.**



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- \* Missing medications
  - \* Continually "losing" prescriptions
  - \* Negative performance at school or work
  - \* Changes in hobbies or interests
  - \* Visits to internet sites with information on how to get and abuse prescription/OTC drugs to "get high"
  - \* Disrupted sleeping/eating patterns
  - \* Changes in friends
  - \* Changes in appearance and hygiene
  - \* Withdrawal from family and friends
  - \* Excessive mood swings (irritability)

## Why Do Youth Abuse?

- ✓ Feel good or "get high"
- ✓ Relieve or stop pain
- ✓ Help with school work
- ✓ Reduce appetite
- ✓ Experiment
- ✓ Relax/reduce stress
- ✓ Escape reality
- ✓ Fall asleep or stay awake
- ✓ Feel accepted by others
- ✓ Feed an addiction

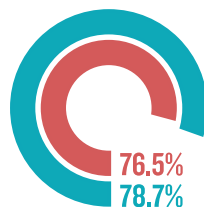


Most youth who abuse prescription drugs get them for free from a **friend or relative**, sometimes without the person's knowledge.

Early substance abuse is associated with a greater likelihood of developing a **substance use disorder later in life.**



**Widely Available:** In North Dakota, the number of controlled substance prescriptions dispensed increased **59.7 percent** between 2008 (935,201) and 2015 (1,493,847).



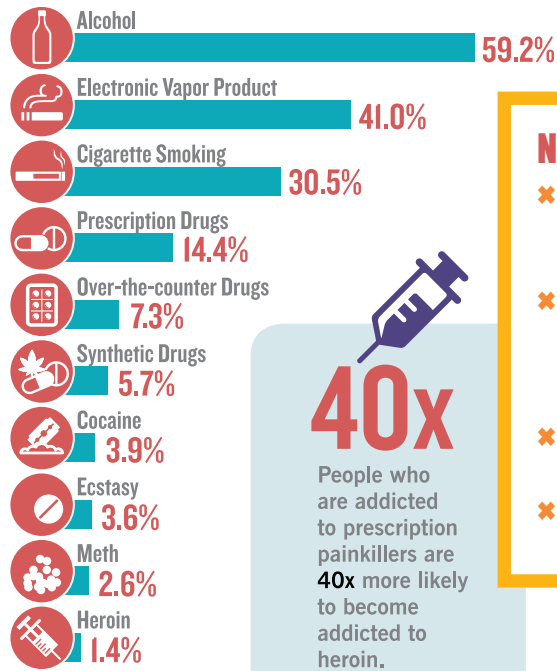
MORE THAN **THREE QUARTERS** OF ND ADULTS BELIEVE **PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE AMONG BOTH YOUTH (76.5%) AND ADULTS (78.7%) IS A PROBLEM IN THEIR COMMUNITY.**

ND Prevention Resource & Media Center, 2017



# 2017 North Dakota High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Reported substance use one or more times in life:



**40x**

People who are addicted to prescription painkillers are **40x** more likely to become addicted to heroin.

## Fentanyl-laced Prescriptions

Fentanyl is an extremely potent synthetic opioid **50 to 100 times stronger than heroin**. Fentanyl is being found in counterfeit pills made to look like prescription pain relievers or sedatives. Those who use laced prescription drugs are at a much higher risk of overdose and death.



Because of its high potency, fentanyl is deadly in very small doses; a lethal dose can be inhaled or absorbed accidentally through skin contact. Drugs obtained on the street, even if they look like a real prescription, may be fatal.

### North Dakota Fast Facts

- ✘ More high school students have abused **prescription and OTC medications (21.7 percent)** than have used synthetic drugs, cocaine, ecstasy and heroin combined (**14.6 percent**).
- ✘ **4.3 percent** of middle school students and **14.4 percent** of high school students reported using prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription (*OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, Codeine, Adderall, Ritalin or Xanax*).
- ✘ **1.8 percent** of middle school students and **7.3 percent** of high school students reported taking OTC drugs to "get high."
- ✘ Nonmedical use of pain relievers is highest among **18- to 25-year-olds**.



**63% REPORTED THEY DID SO FOR THE FIRST TIME BEFORE TURNING 18.**

Of the 4.9% of college students who have used prescription drugs non-medically in the past year,

ND Prevention Resource & Media Center, 2017

## Commonly Abused Prescription/OTC Drugs

Category	Purpose	Generic Names	Commercial Names (common)	Street/Slang Names	Signs of Abuse
Opioids	Relieve pain	codeine	<i>Tylenol with Codeine</i>	Captain Cody, Lean, Sizzurp	Euphoria, drowsiness, sedation, weakness, dizziness, nausea, impaired coordination, confusion, dry mouth, itching, sweating, constipation, slowed breathing. Risk of death increases when combined with alcohol or other depressants. Oxycodone is twice as potent as morphine, and fentanyl is 80 to 100 times as potent as morphine.
		morphine	<i>Roxanol, Duramorph</i>	M, Miss Emma, Monkey	
		methadone	<i>Methadose, Dolophine</i>	Amidone, Fizzies	
		oxycodone HCL	<i>OxyContin, Percocet, Tylox</i>	Oxy, Hillbilly Heroin, Percs	
		hydrocodone	<i>Vicodin, Norco, Lortab, Lorcet</i>	Vike, Vics, Watson-387	
		fentanyl	<i>Actiq, Duragesic, Sublimaze</i>	Apache, China Girl, TNT	
		other	<i>Dilaudid, Demerol, Pana</i>	Juice, Demmies, Biscuits	
Depressants (sedatives/ tranquilizers)	Relieve anxiety or sleep issues	barbiturates	<i>Amytal, Nembutal, Seconal</i>	Barbs, Reds, Phennies	Euphoria, excitement, fever, irritability
		benzodiazepines	<i>Ativan, Valium, Xanax, Klonopin</i>	Candy, Downers, Tranks	Drowsiness, slurred speech, poor concentration, confusion, dizziness
		sleep medications	<i>Ambien, Sonata, Lunesta</i>	Roofies, Forget-me Pill, R2	
Stimulants	Treat ADHD, narcolepsy, or obesity	amphetamine	<i>Adderall, Dexedrine</i>	Addys, Dexies, Uppers	Feelings of exhilaration, increased energy, mental alertness, weight loss, nervousness, insomnia, irregular heartbeat, seizures, psychosis, anger, paranoia, irritability
		methylphenidate	<i>Concerta, Ritalin</i>	JIF, MPH, Vitamin R, Skippy	
		phentermine	<i>AdipexP, Lonamine</i>	Speed, Pep Pills, Zing, Diet Coke	
		other	<i>Belviq, Contrave, Saxenda</i>		
Anabolic Steroids	Hormone therapy	nandrolone	<i>Oxandrin</i>	Juice, Gym Candy, Pumpers, Roids, Gear, Stackers	Acne, fluid retention, aggression, mood swings, extreme irritability, delusions, stunted growth
		oxandrolone	<i>Anadrol</i>		
Over-the-counter Medicine	Relieve cough/ cold	dextromethorphan (DXM)	Brand names include "DM" ( <i>Robitussin, Mucinex</i> , etc.)	Robotripping, Robo, Triple-C, Dex, Tussin, Purple Drank	Euphoria, slurred speech, increased heart rate, dizziness, nausea, paranoia
	Relieve diarrhea	loperamide hydrochloride	<i>Imodium</i>	The Poor Man's Methadone	Euphoria, fainting, stomach pain, constipation, pupil dilation, kidney failure, heart attack

## Proper Disposal

Reducing Access Will Reduce Abuse

North Dakota is the only state offering two free programs to dispose of unwanted medications year-round: the **Take Back** program at participating law enforcement agencies and the **MedSafe** program at participating pharmacies. More than 11 tons of unused medications have been collected from the Take Back containers. Visit [takeback.nd.gov](http://takeback.nd.gov) to find a location near you. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet or drain unless the label instructs to do so. For information on proper disposal, visit [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).

## Prevention Strategies for Caring Adults/Parents

- Take inventory of all prescriptions and secure them in a locked area.
- Talk to youth about the risks of abuse.
- Keep communication open.
- Monitor and supervise youth.
- Keep updated and informed on the latest prescription/OTC drug trends.
- Call 1-855-378-4373 ([Partnership for Drug Free Kids](#)) for confidential support for your family.



LOCK



MONITOR



TAKE BACK

ND Prevention Resource & Media Center, 2017

## References

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EXTENSION

