



KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS UNIT

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE



WHAT IS PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Prescription drug abuse involves using medication without a prescription, in a manner other than prescribed, or for the purpose of experiencing its effects.

COMMONLY ABUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

- **Opioids:** usually prescribed to treat pain
- **Central nervous system depressants:** used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders
- **Stimulants:** most often prescribed to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)



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DEPENDENCE VS. ADDICTION

Physical dependence results from normal adaptations to chronic drug exposure and is often accompanied by tolerance. While addiction may include physical dependence, it is defined by compulsive drug seeking and use despite severe, sometimes devastating, consequences.

PREVENTING AND RECOGNIZING ABUSE

Physicians, patients, and pharmacists all play important roles in identifying and preventing prescription drug abuse. As a patient, you can help by using prescription medications appropriately, always following the prescribed directions, being aware of potential interactions with other drugs, never stopping or changing a dosing regimen without first consulting your provider, and never using another person's prescription.

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