



FAST FACTS

A message for health care providers



Prescription Drug Abuse

Role of health care providers

Health care providers are in a unique position to identify prescription drug abuse when it exists and help the patient recognize the problem, set recovery goals, and seek appropriate treatment when necessary. Preventing or ending prescription drug abuse is an important part of patient care. However, providers should not avoid prescribing or administering medications if clearly indicated.

Where are the drugs coming from?

Persons ages 12 years or older who used pain relievers for non-medical purposes in past 12 months (2008-9):

- 55 % acquired them from a friend or relative free of charge
- 10 % bought them from a friend or relative
- 18 % acquired them through a prescription from a doctor

Source: SAMHSA (2010). *Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings* (Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No. SMA 10-586Findings). Rockville, MD

Things you can do in your practice

- Incorporate screening for any type of substance abuse into routine history taking. Include questions about what prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines the patient is taking and why.
- Note any increases in the amount of a medication needed or frequent requests for refills before the quantity prescribed should have been used which may indicate development of tolerance or improper use.
- Tylenol and NSAIDs may be the appropriate first line medication to prescribe. If more powerful medication is indicated, consider prescribing smaller amounts and fewer refills.
- Encourage patients to lock their medicine cabinets to prevent others from accessing their medications.
- Encourage patients to properly dispose of unused medications. There will be a **free drug drop off event** on **April 30, 2011**. For more details see <http://www.nationalprescriptiondrugdropoff.com/>. Also, please **hang the enclosed flyer** in your offices. Please make copies as needed.
- Those addicted to prescription medications may engage in "doctor shopping."
 - NY State Department of Health, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement has implemented the Controlled Substance Information (CSI) on Dispensed Prescriptions Program.
 - CSI provides direct, secure access to practitioners to view patients' recent controlled substance prescription history through their existing Health Commerce System (HCS) account (<https://commerce.health.state.ny.us>.) Practitioners that do not currently have an HCS account can register online at <https://hcsteamwork1.health.state.ny.us/pub/top.html>.
 - For further information, please call the NYSDOH at (866) 811-7957 (Option 4).

Resources

- NIDAMED Resources for Medical and Health Professionals www.drugabuse.gov/NIDAMED/
- FDA Approved Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS) www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientsandProviders/ucm111350.htm
- National Council on Patient Information and Education www.talkaboutrx.org/