



PROPER USE OF ADHD MEDICATION



STIMULANTS AND ADHD

Stimulant medications, such as amphetamine and methylphenidate, are commonly prescribed treatments for ADHD. Stimulant medications for ADHD may be effective when used as part of a total treatment plan, which may include counseling and other therapies.

As with any medication, proper use is important. Stimulant medications for ADHD are controlled substances (regulated by the federal government) and need to be handled in a serious manner. It is also important to know that selling or giving away your medication may harm others and it is illegal. That's why it's important to understand the appropriate use of stimulants.

At Shire we are committed to partnering with medical professionals to help provide the best education possible for anyone diagnosed with ADHD. We are also committed to educating consumers about the risks of stimulants.



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IMPROPER STIMULANT USE

Prescription stimulants should never be used without a prescription. No matter what term you use to describe it, using a prescription medication in a way that does not follow the prescription or that is not yours can be dangerous and it's against the law. Stimulant medications aren't safer than street drugs just because they are prescribed.

Terms used to describe improper stimulant use include misuse, abuse, and diversion.

Misuse

Misuse of a prescription stimulant happens any time the medicine is used in a way that is different from the doctor's instructions. Misuse could be:

- » Taking an extra pill of your own prescription stimulant to concentrate while studying
- » Taking a friend's prescription stimulant because you think you have ADHD

Abuse

Using a prescription medicine to get high or taking a prescription stimulant to see how it makes you feel is considered abuse. Stimulants have a high potential for abuse, and should be used only as directed.

Diversion

Diversion occurs when someone other than the person whose name is on the prescription uses it. Examples are giving your medication to a friend or taking medication from a sibling.

There are a number of possible side effects that may occur as a result of taking too much stimulant at one time or taking large doses over an extended period of time. These include, but are not limited to:

- Dizziness
- Tremor
- Headache
- Flushed skin
- Chest pain with palpitations
- Excessive sweating
- Vomiting
- Abdominal cramps
- Agitation
- Hostility
- Panic
- Aggression
- Suicidal or homicidal tendencies
- Paranoia, sometimes along with both auditory and visual hallucinations.

Signs of overdose with stimulants often include high fever, convulsions, and cardiovascular collapse. If you or someone you care for takes too much ADHD medication or overdoses, call a doctor or poison control center or get emergency treatment right away.

BE SAFE WITH YOUR MEDICINE

If you have been prescribed medication for the treatment of ADHD, be sure to take it exactly as directed by your doctor. Store your medication in a safe place. Count the pills regularly to make sure no one else is using them.

Selling or giving away your prescription medication may harm others and is against the law. There are state and federal laws that punish the misuse, abuse, and diversion of stimulant medication prescribed for ADHD.



For more information talk to your doctor or visit the following resources:

- » National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) at www.nimh.nih.gov
- » National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) at www.nida.nih.gov
- » The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at www.samhsa.gov
- » Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) at www.dea.gov