

Safety Tips:

Teen Drug Abuse



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Childhood Injury Prevention

- 1 in 4 teens has reported misusing or abusing a prescription drug at least once in their lifetime. It is important to have frank, honest, and frequent conversations with your child about the dangers of medicine abuse.
- Keep track of the number of pills in your prescription bottles or pill packets and the number of refills. If there are any changes in the frequency of refills or the number of pills expected, this may indicate a problem.
- If your teen is prescribed a medication, especially one that is addictive or commonly abused, control the medication and monitor the dosages and refills.
- Encourage guests to your home or the authority figures in places your child frequents to keep track of their medications as well.
- Keep prescription medications in a secure place only you know about.

Opioid Prescriptions

If your child's doctor has prescribed an opioid (narcotic) medicine for pain here are some important reminders about opioids:

- Only give your child this medicine as prescribed by your child's doctor.
- Do NOT let anyone else except the child named on the bottle take this medicine.
- This medication is addictive and should ALWAYS be kept locked and under parental control.
- Discuss a plan to gradually stop this medicine with your child's doctor.
- If you need a refill of this medication, ask your doctor's office at least 3 days in advance.
- Get rid of the unused portion of this medicine in one of the following ways:
 - Visit the website <https://dontrushtoflush.org/> for places to dispose of it
 - Take it to a law enforcement office for disposal
 - Take it back to your pharmacy, if they dispose of leftover drugs
 - As a last resort, mix the left over medication with coffee grounds or kitty litter, seal tightly in a plastic bag, and throw in the trash.
- Remove any personal, identifiable information from prescription bottles or pill packages before throwing them away to prevent unauthorized refills and protect your privacy.
- Changes in mood, weight loss or gain, depression, problems in school, feeling shaky or sick when the drug is not used, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, anxiety, depression, increased tolerance and reliance on drugs, and withdrawal from friends and family can all be signs of drug addiction. Look out for these signs and seek professional help if necessary.

