

STAND OUT

THROW IT OUT.

CRASH

COURSE

ON

RX

DRUGS

Prescription drugs: when used as directed, they are a valuable tool. When misused, they become a dangerous problem. Healthcare professionals will typically give prescriptions to individuals who are medically authorized to use them—in the appropriate dosage and frequency—as a way to treat various symptoms they may be experiencing. There are several different kinds of prescription drugs, but these are some of the most commonly abused ones:

STIMULANTS

typically used to treat conditions such as ADHD or narcolepsy, but if abused they can cause things like dangerous fevers, paranoia, and irregular heartbeats

OPIOIDS

prescribed as strong painkillers following surgery, injury, or as part of a treatment plan for cancer patients; when misused, they cause drowsiness, nausea, slowed breathing

DEPRESSANTS

normally help patients to manage anxiety, panic, and sleeping disorders; when misused, they can cause fatigue, slurred speech, shallow breathing, disorientation, or seizures

There's a common misperception that prescription drugs are safer than other drugs, but they pose serious consequences when used inappropriately. The misuse and abuse of a prescription drug—just like any mind-altering drug—puts consumers at heightened risk for engaging in dangerous behavior and experiencing detrimental health effects.

In 2021, approximately 16,706 people died from an overdose involving prescription opioids.

Center for Disease Control

