

Talking with Your Child about the Use of Prescription Stimulants (Adderall, Ritalin) and Methamphetamine

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SPOTLIGHT FACTSHEET

BACKGROUND ON METHAMPHETAMINE MISUSE

While not commonly used among NH youth, methamphetamine use is coming to the attention of parents, providers, educators and law enforcement. The good news is, the rates of use are actually going down in most NH communities, but there are areas of increased use. The greatest concern is the new method of distribution in which methamphetamine is made to look like prescription Adderall pills.

A person may misuse both prescription stimulants and methamphetamine thinking they will perform better at school by staying focused, alert and awake. Methamphetamine is also a stimulant that people take to get high and to get a rush of energy. This makes it a popular substance to take when going to a dance club. Both prescription stimulants and methamphetamine can be swallowed, snorted, inhaled, smoked, or injected into a vein (increasing effect and potential for addiction).

There are two separate but related problems when it comes to the misuse of stimulant drugs. The first problem is the misuse of stimulants that are prescribed to treat ADHD. When used as prescribed, these medications (Adderall, Ritalin) are safe, effective and have low risk of addiction. These medications are not a problem, if:

- it's your prescription to take (not someone else's).
- you are taking the right amount and not more to get high.
- you are taking the prescription in the form it was prescribed like a pill (not crushing or injecting).
- you aren't mixing the medication with alcohol or other substances.

When misused, prescription stimulants can be dangerous and addictive. Misuse includes taking a prescription medication:

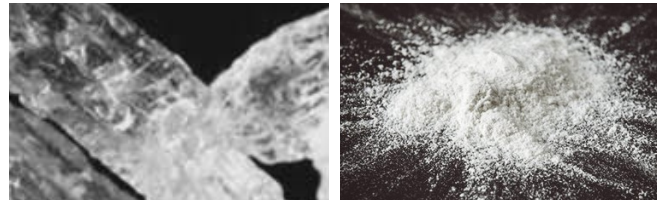
- that was not prescribed to you.
- in a greater quantity or more often than prescribed.
- in a form other than its original form (e.g. snorting or injecting).
- and mixing it with alcohol or other substances.

OTHER NAMES OF METHAMPHETAMINE ARE:

speed • uppers • meth • crystal meth
chalk • ice • glass • Christmas tree
crank (especially when injected)
Ice refers to a form of crystal meth

OTHER NAMES FOR PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS ARE:

study drug • bennies • beans
black beauties • addies



METHAMPHETAMINE CRYSTAL AND POWDER



METHAMPHETAMINE PILLS - PRESSED TO LOOK LIKE ADDERALL

The other problem is that methamphetamine is now being made to look like prescription medications like Adderall. This methamphetamine is dangerous, powerful, highly addictive and potentially lethal. Because of the way it is made, each batch is different in potency or contents and can be laced with other harmful substances like fentanyl. Using one of these look alike pills puts you at risk of severe consequences. One way to reduce that risk is to only take prescription medication from the original bottle and not from another source like a baggy.

Photo courtesy: Drug Enforcement Agency

MISUSING METHAMPHETAMINE AND OTHER STIMULANTS CAN HAVE SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS:

- make you feel paranoid and anxious
- increase your blood pressure
- cause you to have irregular heartbeat
- cause your body temperatures to go too hot or overheat
- impact your sleep
- risk of overdose
- put you at risk of seizures and stroke at high doses
- cause severe tooth decay and gum disease
- cause brain damage resulting in problems with memory and body movements and mood swings.

HELPING YOU HELP YOUR KIDS

Educate yourself about methamphetamine

misuse: Understand how and why young people misuse methamphetamine and learn about the short and long term effects.

Educate your child about the impact of

methamphetamine misuse: A child's brain is developing well into their 20s. Healthy experiences form important connections in the brain that build wiring necessary for learning, problem solving, memory and other tasks. Misusing prescription stimulants and methamphetamine makes it difficult for the young brain to communicate, learn, regulate emotion and mood and process information now and later in life.

Seek expert help when needed: Seek the services and support of a professional when you think your child is misusing prescription stimulants and methamphetamine. Your doctor can help with treatment, counseling and medication (if needed).

Talk about prescription medications: If your child uses prescription stimulants like Adderall or Ritalin, then talk about the importance of never sharing their prescription with another person under any circumstances. Medications prescribed for someone else are not safe for them to take.



MORE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR CHILD

The Partnership @drugfreeNH

drugfreeNH.org: A safe place to gather and learn about local strategies and activities to prevent substance misuse.

2-1-1 NH

211NH.org: A comprehensive source of information about local resources and services to help you take care of yourself.

The Doorway

thedorway.nh.gov or call 2-1-1 (or 1-866-444-4211): A statewide service that supports any NH resident, of any age, with a substance or alcohol concern or issue.

NH Alcohol and Drug Treatment Locator

nhtreatment.org: A searchable database with treatment agencies and individual practitioners offering substance use disorder services.