

Care Enough **Not** to Share

Don't Share Prescription Drugs

Sharing prescription drugs with family or friends, even when you intend to help them, is a dangerous misuse that could cause serious consequences.

Taking a prescription drug that was not prescribed to you is considered prescription drug misuse. Prescription drug misuse also includes using a drug that was prescribed to you in greater amounts, more often, over a longer period of time, or in any other way not directed by a doctor.



Young Adults Are Most Impacted

More than any other age group, 18-25 year olds misuse prescription drugs and share them with friends.

If you are a young adult, you and your friends are more likely than any other age group to misuse opioid pain relievers, ADHD stimulants and anti-anxiety drugs. Your age group is also more likely to share medication than any other age group.

Even though it may seem harmless to share prescription drugs with a friend or family member, doing so involves many risks with potentially dangerous consequences.

- **It's Illegal:** Federal and state law prohibits the sharing of prescription drugs that are controlled substances. Controlled substances include opioids (like Percocet), stimulants (like Adderall), and benzodiazepines (like Xanax).
- **Different Doses:** Drugs are prescribed in different dosages with different instructions based on the individual. So even if a person has a prescription for the drug you planned to share with them, their doctor may have them on a different dose or medication schedule.
- **Serious Side Effects:** All medications have side effects, which doctors take into consideration when they choose a certain medicine for their patient. Medications will have different results on each individual, based on their health needs and how they interact (potentially badly) with other medicines.
- **Potential for Addiction:** Taking medications in any way that a doctor didn't prescribe can lead to physical dependence and drug addiction. Some people are more susceptible to addiction than others, but anyone can become addicted.
- **Connection to Other Drug Use:** Misusing prescription opioids like Percocet or OxyContin has been linked with eventual heroin use, which can lead to many problems with your health and the legal system. By only taking drugs prescribed to you, you can help break the connection between prescription painkiller misuse and heroin addiction.



Don't Add to the Numbers.

Don't Share Prescription Drugs

95,000

95,000 young adults in PA report misusing a prescription pain reliever in the past year.

5,400

Over 5,400 people in PA died of a drug-related overdose in 2017.

3X

People between the ages of 18 and 25 are nearly 3 times as likely to misuse prescription drugs than adolescents (ages 12-17) or adults ages 26 and older.

- **38%** of young adults who misuse prescription pain relievers (e.g. Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet) report getting them for free from a friend or relative.
- **46%** of young adults who misuse prescription tranquilizers (e.g. Xanax, Valium, Klonopin) report getting them for free from a friend or relative.
- **51%** of young adults who misuse prescription stimulants (e.g. Adderall, Ritalin) report getting them for free from a friend or relative.

Learn More. **PAStop.org**

CPA Commonwealth Prevention Alliance
Stop Opiate Abuse Campaign