



THE PRESCRIPTION PLAYBOOK

ADOLESCENT GUIDE

How to protect yourself and others from the misuse and abuse of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter medications.



SAFE USE
starts with you.



SAFE STORAGE
protects others.



SAFE DISPOSAL
is a solution for all.



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SAFE USE STARTS WITH YOU.

Safe decisions start with **you**. Commit to a healthy life by being a conscious decision maker when it comes to making smart choices about prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter medications. Advocate for yourself and be mindful of the medications and substances you're putting into your body. Medications and substances have short-term and long-term effects that can change your ability to live your best life. Your brain is in a critical phase of development during your teenage years and well into your 20s. The misuse of substances can affect your development, reward system, and lead to increased risk of substance use disorder (SUD) as an adult.

PRESCRIPTION, ILLICIT, AND OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Prescription

Only available with a valid prescription from a doctor and/or pharmacist

Regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and require a visit to a doctor, a diagnosis, and monitoring

Intended for use only by one individual patient to treat pain or a medical condition

Illicit

Use and misuse of illegal and controlled drugs¹

Underage use of marijuana and any use of cocaine, crack, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or methamphetamine, as well as misuse of prescription psychotherapeutic drugs (pain relievers, stimulants, etc.)¹

Over-the-Counter

Available for purchase without a prescription and with the guidance of a parent or guardian

Does not require a visit to a doctor or consultation with a pharmacist

SAFE DECISIONS BEGIN WITH SIMPLE CONVERSATIONS.

1

TALK WITH YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN. Have open conversations with your parent or guardian when it comes to medication safety. Don't be afraid to ask questions and advocate for your health and well-being.

2

TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR AND/OR PHARMACIST. Listen and talk to your doctor and/or pharmacist and ensure that all instructions match their directions. Read all printed information that is provided and ask questions about your prescription or over-the-counter medication.

3

TALK WITH ANOTHER TRUSTED ADULT. Identify a trusted adult in your support system that you feel comfortable having discussions with and asking questions to. It is important to have more than one trusted adult to talk to other than your parent/guardian when it comes to discussions about the use and misuse of medications.

4

TALK WITH YOUR PEERS (AND YOUR OWN COMMUNITY). By increasing your knowledge of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter medications and by making good choices, you can help create a safe environment for yourself and those around you.

OPIOIDS AND IMPACT

A class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription²

SHORT-TERM EFFECTS	LONG-TERM EFFECTS	PERFORMANCE EFFECTS
Opioids temporarily reduce the intensity of pain and can cause nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, constipation, slowed or labored breathing, difficulty concentrating, and overdose which can result in death. ²	Long-term effects include substance use disorder (SUD), a slowed down nervous system which affects the ability to send messages, an increase in blood pressure, irregular heart rhythms, opioid use disorder (OUD), and overdose which can result in death. ²	Opioids can make individuals physically and mentally dependent on an opioid or cause opioid use disorder (OUD) which can lead to the inability to stay focused, loss of interests in activities, and the inability to function during day-to-day activities. ²

WHAT IF YOU'RE PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS OR OTHER MEDICATIONS?

Talk openly with the doctor or healthcare provider and explore alternatives to opioids or other prescription medications. Share full personal and family medical history and information about other medications that are being taken, and don't hesitate to ask questions. If you are prescribed opioids or other prescription medications, follow the guidelines to reduce use as soon as possible, and continue to follow guidelines for safe use, storage, and disposal.

Be your own best advocate by confiding in your support system throughout your pain management journey and recovery. Don't be afraid to ask for additional support if your emotional or physical pain increases.

WHAT ARE SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS?

Synthetic opioids are substances that are created in a laboratory and act the same way in the brain and body as natural opioids, producing pain relief effects. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50-100 times stronger than morphine. The fatal dose of fentanyl is just 2 mg and fatal doses of fentanyl are being found in all illicitly made substances and medications. The misuse of fentanyl can result in substance use disorder (SUD), overdose, and even death.³



Fatal synthetic opioid overdoses in Illinois youths (age 13-17 years) increased from three fatalities in 2020 to 14 fatalities in 2021. This is a 367% increase in the number of synthetic opioid overdoses in Illinois adolescents.⁴

ALTERNATIVES TO PAIN MANAGEMENT



YOGA

Yoga can improve flexibility, reduce inflammation, and help people cope with their pain mentally. Inflammation is reduced by decreasing the body's stress response and can help decrease pain perception by dissociating negative emotions from pain, making it easier for people to feel accepting of and positive toward their pain.⁵



MEDITATION

Meditation uses neural pathways that make the brain less sensitive to pain and increases use of the brain's own pain-reducing chemicals that could replace pain medications.⁵

Engage in 3-4-5 breathing during meditation, which is breathing in for three seconds, holding your breath for four seconds, and breathing out for five seconds.



EXERCISE

Physical activity reduces pain by building muscle strength and flexibility, along with reducing fatigue, pain sensitivity, and inflammation. Both aerobic and strengthening exercises can help reduce or manage pain. The important thing is to keep moving and enjoy the exercises that you're doing. Movement, no matter how minimal, can help.⁶



NUTRITION

Your immune system is constantly fighting for your body. For our bodies to build muscle and recover from injury, we need a strong immune system, which can be strengthened by making healthy food choices. Foods that help strengthen the immune system can include whole fruits, dark leafy vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains.

REFUSAL SKILL BUILDING

STAY PERSISTENT

Be firm in your refusals and convey a sense of confidence when refusing substances. Repeat your refusal phrase if needed.⁷

BODY LANGUAGE

Look them in the eye, use a firm voice, and appear as confident as possible. The more confident or firm you are, the less likely someone will try to pressure you.⁷

REFUSAL SKILLS

Your response may be more openly accepted by others when you communicate your values and reasons for refusing substances, such as having to work early or practice for a big game. Being prepared with your refusal phrase will help you be more confident and ready in the moment.⁷

EXPLAIN YOUR REFUSAL

When all else fails, advocating for yourself by leaving the situation sends a powerful message. If people don't understand your values, it's time to exit the situation. Take time to think about who your trusted adult is to reach out to in situations like this.⁷

LEAVE THE SITUATION

When it comes to refusal skills, the most important thing to remember is to be prepared. Practice and prepare your refusal skills so that you are ready and equipped to use it if you are ever being offered substances.

Direct social pressure, such as somebody directly pressuring a friend to take medications that don't belong to them, is often hard to overcome. People inherently want to fit in with and please their social circle. Indirect social pressure, which is being in a situation where there are people abusing substances, can sometimes be more difficult to overcome.

There are different methods available for both direct and indirect social pressure, such as refusal skill building. **Learning not just to say no, but how to say no, can have a great impact on you, your friends, and your community.**

RESOURCES

Illinois has various resources available for helping assist in overcoming dependency and substance use disorder (SUD). If you have any additional questions about substances, call your doctor or pharmacist. In case of an emergency, call 911 immediately.



The Illinois Helpline refers to hundreds of treatment and recovery providers across Illinois. Helpline services are always confidential and their goal is to guide you to the treatment options that are always best for you.

SCAN FOR ILLINOIS
HELPLINE



Illinois
CHOOSE OPTIMAL • TAKE THE LEAD • ACHIEVE TOGETHER

The Human Performance Project is a nationally recognized program founded by 30-year human performance researcher and Olympic trainer, John Underwood. Partnering with the Veteran Navy SEALs of Applied Performance Sciences, the program's message of healthy choices and positive leadership empowers students to hold one another accountable to decisions that lead to optimal performance. The Illinois Human Performance Project focuses on five modules: sleep, nutrition, chemical health, mood and mindset, and leadership.

SCAN FOR THE ILLINOIS HUMAN
PERFORMANCE PROJECT



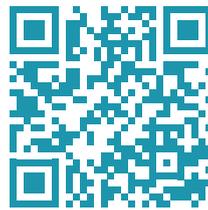
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation and to improve the lives of individuals living with mental and substance use disorders, and their families. Their mission is to lead public health and service delivery efforts that promote mental health, prevent substance misuse, and provide treatments and supports to foster recovery while ensuring equitable access and better outcomes.

SCAN FOR SAMHSA



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