

## Why you should be concerned

**FACT:** Among persons aged 12 or older who used pain relievers non-medically in the past year, an estimated 70% obtained them from a friend or relative. (NSDUH 2011)

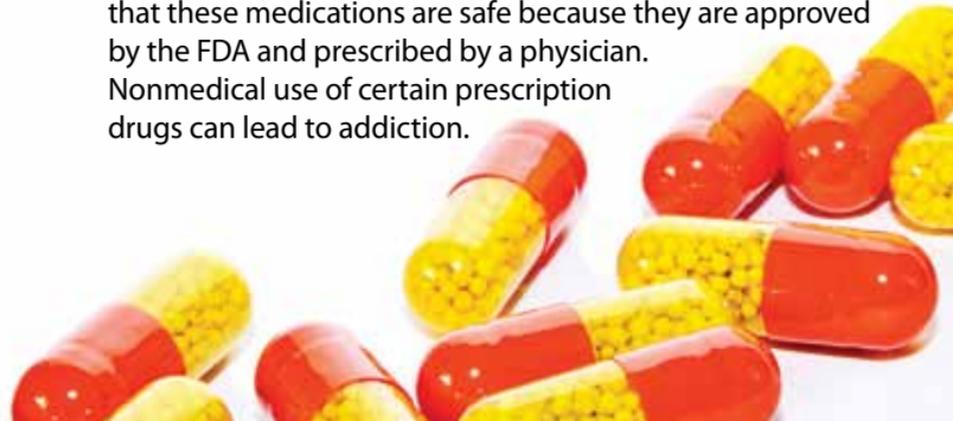
**FACT:** Nonmedical use of prescription drugs among youth and young adults aged 12 to 25 in 2011 was the second most prevalent illicit drug use category, with marijuana being first. (NSDUH 2011)

**FACT:** According to the Federal Drug Abuse Warning Network, emergency room visits due to abuse of prescription drugs are greater than the number of visits due to abuse of marijuana and heroin combined.

**FACT:** Studies report that older persons regularly consume on average between two and six prescription medications and between one and three over-the-counter medications. An estimated one in five older Americans (19 percent) may be affected by combined difficulties with alcohol and medication misuse.

Prescription drug abuse is the use of prescription medication in a manner that is not prescribed by a health care practitioner. This includes using someone else's prescription or using your own prescription in a way not directed by your doctor.

Most people take prescription medication responsibly under a doctor's care. However, there has been a steady increase in the non-medical use of these medications, especially by teenagers. Part of the problem is the availability of medications (over-the-counter and prescription) in the family medicine cabinet which can provide easy access to children, adults, elderly and visitors. People often mistakenly believe that these medications are safe because they are approved by the FDA and prescribed by a physician. Nonmedical use of certain prescription drugs can lead to addiction.



The following organizations offer information and resources that can help you and your family.



**1-877-8-HOPENY**  
Find Help for **1-877-846-7369**  
Alcoholism, Drug Abuse, Problem Gambling

**New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services** [www.oasas.ny.gov](http://www.oasas.ny.gov)  
518-473-3460

**The Partnership at Drugfree.org** [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)  
855-378-4373

**Al-Anon and Alateen** [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)  
757-563-1600

**SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment** [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)  
240-276-1660

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services** [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)  
877-SAMHSA-7

**National Institute on Drug Abuse** [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)  
800-662-HELP

**National Council on Alcohol & Drug Dependence** [www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org)  
800-NCACALL

## Is Your Medicine Cabinet Safe? Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medicine Abuse



