

GenerationRx

Preventing the Misuse and Abuse
of Prescription Medications

PRESCRIPTION
for
DISASTER



Student Handbook

PreSCRIPTION for DISASTER!

Americans are using prescription drugs at unprecedented rates. In 2009, Americans purchased nearly 4 billion prescription medications¹. Unfortunately, we are becoming a growing culture that self-diagnoses and selfprescribes, expecting quick fixes to any health-related problem. These attitudes underlie a phrase that is being used to describe us at every age, in America’s drug-taking society, — “Generation Rx.”

In 2010, approximately 7 million Americans (age 12 or older) abused a prescription medication². However, the average age for starting the abuse of these medications remains 21-23 years², representing the average college student. This discussion accompanies “The InterACT Play”, and together, explores possible reasons underlying these statistics, as well as addresses many of the issues faced by our youth, college students and society as a result of prescription drug abuse.

ACT 1: What is prescription drug abuse?

**What behaviors do you classify as prescription drug abuse?
Do you think Terrence abused his Vicodin® prescription?**

How do teens and college students justify their abuse of prescription drugs?

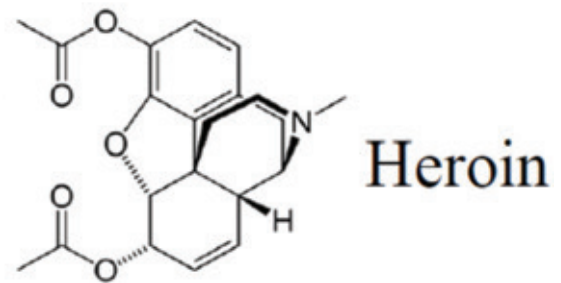
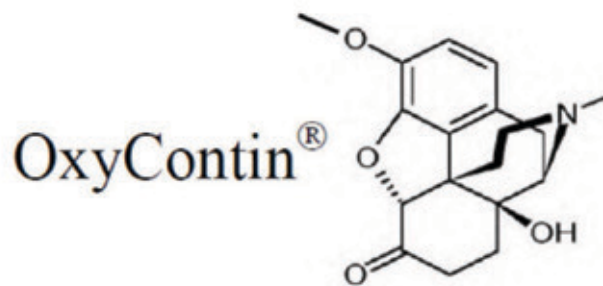
¹ IMS Health. 2010 U.S. Sales and Prescription Information. Available at <http://www.imshealth.com>. Accessed June 11, 2012.

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings*, NSDUH Series H-41, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 11-4658. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011.

Think about it:

Would you consider the abuse of prescription drugs to be a safe alternative to the abuse of street drugs?

Take a look at these two structures:



Do you think OxyContin[®] mimics the actions of Heroin?

ACT 2: Is abusing prescription drugs really that dangerous?

Steven's abuse of Adderall® led him to try and abuse other prescription drugs. Do you think Adderall® is a gateway drug among youth today? Why or why not?

Think about both Steven and Mike's experiences with prescription drugs. What consequences might abusers of prescription drugs experience?

Mike believes that addiction to prescription drugs remains a choice. What do you think?



ACT 3: What do you think?

At the end, each character summarizes their thoughts towards prescription drug abuse.
What character do you identify with the most?

What questions would you ask each character?
How do you think those characters would respond?

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