

- Hot flushes
- Dizziness
- Hallucinations
- Psychotic episodes
- Psychological addiction and depression
- Brain damage

## Mixing drugs

The effects of taking different drugs at the same time can be unpredictable and dangerous. It's always best not to mix any drugs unless told otherwise by your doctor.

## In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had prescription or OTC drugs and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police. While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with them
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

## Giving up

If you want to give up drugs, but have been using them for a long time, your body has to get used to functioning without them. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms, which can last for around a week. It's important to ask for medical help to get you through withdrawal safely.

**If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to the back page.**

**If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, taking drugs can affect your baby. Read more about this topic in the *Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community* booklet available at [vaccho.org.au](http://vaccho.org.au).**

**It's illegal to sell or give prescription medicine to someone else.**

# Help and support

### DirectLine

Tel: 1800 888 236

24 hours, 7 days a week

Confidential AOD counselling and referral line

### Family Drug Help

Tel: 1300 660 068

Monday to Friday 9am-9pm

### Youth Support & Advocacy Service

Tel: 1800 014 446

24 hour toll free service

Service for people aged 12 – 21 years

### Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre

Tel: 03 8413 8413

### Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Freecall: 1800 064 865

### Harm Reduction Victoria

Tel: 03 9329 1500

### Australian Drug Foundation

[www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au)

### Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

Tel: 03 9411 9411

[www.vaccho.org.au](http://www.vaccho.org.au)

Read more about other drugs within your community in the *Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community* booklet, available at [vaccho.org.au](http://vaccho.org.au).



## A guide to prescription and over-the-counter drugs within our community



Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community



# Prescription and over-the-counter drugs

## Street names

Xanax: zannies, z-bar, benzos.

Oxycodone: oxies, hillbilly heroin, dope, 40s, 20, 80s.

Valium: blues, v's.

Ritalin: rid, vitamin R, ritties, rits.

## How should they be used?

When taking these drugs it's important to follow the instructions, either from your doctor for prescription medicines or on the packet for OTC drugs. If you do have bad side effects from taking the drug, tell your doctor or chemist so they can give you a different drug or change how much you take to make sure you don't get sicker.

It's important to never take prescription medicines unless they have been prescribed specifically for you. A drug that might be OK for someone else might have a different effect on you and could make you sicker. That's why to get prescription medicine a doctor has to check you out and then monitor you. This is also why it's illegal to sell or give prescription medicine to someone else.

## Abuse of prescription and OTC drugs

Some people use prescription and OTC drugs to get 'high', help with the 'come down' of other drugs, or continue taking them after their prescription has finished because they are addicted.

Many prescription and OTC drugs are addictive and using them regularly increases your chances of becoming dependent on them. Addiction can cause:

- Needing to use more to get the same effect
- Relying on drugs to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

## Opioids (pain killers)

Some of the most common prescription and OTC drugs that are misused are opioids (pain killers).

Examples include:

- Morphine (MS Contin)
- Oxycodone (OxyContin)
- Codeine (Panadeine Forte)

Opioids affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Drowsiness
- Constipation
- Nausea
- Dry mouth
- Itching
- Slow breathing
- Unconsciousness, coma and death

## Depressants ('downers')

Benzodiazepines are usually used to treat anxiety, panic attacks and/or sleep problems and include:

- Diazepam (Valium)
- Temazepam (Temtabs)
- Alprazolam (Xanax)

Antipsychotics are usually used to manage mental health conditions and include:

- Zyprexa
- Seroquel

Depressants affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling happy and sleepy
- Confusion and trouble concentrating

- Clumsiness and feeling dizzy
- Seeing and hearing things that aren't there
- Slurred speech
- Headaches
- Depression
- Coma and death

## Stimulants ('uppers')

Stimulants are often used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or narcolepsy and include:

- Methylphenidate (Ritalin)
- Dexamphetamine

Stimulants affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Happiness and confidence
- Talking more and feeling energetic
- Fast heart beat and breathing
- Stomach pain and reduced appetite
- Headaches
- Dizziness and blurred vision
- Paranoia, hallucinations and confusion
- Irritability and violence
- Passing out

## Cough and cold medicines

Cough and cold medicines often contain dextromethorphan (DXM) that some people take in high doses to get 'high', which may also cause:

- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Allergic reactions