The Silent Epidemic -- Legal Prescription Drug Abuse

Not a lot of attention is paid to prescription drug abuse. But nearly 20 percent of Americans have used prescription drugs for nonmedicinal reasons. Three quarters of those may be abusing prescription drugs.

Between 1992 and 2002, the number of prescriptions written increased by 61 percent. In that same period, the number of prescriptions written for opiates increased by almost 400 percent.

The Baltimore Sun reports:

“According to a report ... by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hospitalizations for poisoning by prescription opioids, sedatives and tranquilizers jumped 65 percent from 1999 to 2006. One-third of new addicts report that their first drug experience was with prescription drugs.”

Sources:

The Baltimore Sun April 21, 2010

Comments:

Remember the Reagan-era anti-drug ads, “Just Say NO!”?

Well, since then, street drugs have taken the backseat to a far greater threat – prescription drugs, especially pain killers.
Contrary to the popular belief propagated by the drug industry, taking prescription drugs is a health RISK – not a healthy treatment to a health problem. This backwards ideology has created a nation of extremely sick people, and a whole new generation of drug addicts.

In fact, prescription drugs are now the preferred “high” for many, especially teens, as they are typically used legally, which eliminates the stigma of being a “junkie.” And even if you don’t have your own prescription, drugs of all kinds can be found in the nearest medicine cabinet in most homes.

If you don’t believe drugs have become extremely easy to get a hold of, take a look at the latest drug use statistics from the Kaiser Health Foundation.

The average American, aged 19 to 64, now takes close to 12 prescription drugs!

The average senior typically fills over 30 prescriptions every year, and even children, between the ages of 0-18, are taking an average of close to 4 prescriptions annually!

This brings up yet another problem, which is the exponentially increased health risk of mixing multiple drugs.

Both of these issues – prescription drug abuse, and drug overuse – have a major impact on the health, well being, and longevity of the American population, as well as our health care system.

The Baltimore Sun quotes R. Gil Kerlikowske, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, as saying:

"With drug use accounting for tens of billions of dollars per year in health care costs, and drug overdoses ranking second only to motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of accidental death, the nation needs to discard the idea that enforcement alone can eliminate our drug problem."

Reflect on this for just a moment…

*Drug use accounts for tens of billions of dollars per year in health care costs*… That’s tens of billions of dollars IN ADDITION TO the close to one TRILLION dollars those same drugs cost our health care system in the first place!
This is about as close to insanity as you can get when thinking that “more and better drugs” are the answer to our nation’s failing health...

Folks, it’s time to wake up from our collective slumber and cease to fall prey to this predatory type of “health care.”

**Big Pharma has Succeeded where Drug Mafias have Failed…**

With numbers like these, it’s no wonder prescription drug abuse and poisoning deaths are skyrocketing. And since it’s all legal, no one is really cracking down on this growing drug problem that is wrecking lives each day.

How could they, really? The US government has done everything in their power to aid Big Pharma’s influence and profits, and you can’t increase drug sales while dissuading people from taking them at the same time.

But make no mistake, prescription drug use is one of the most significant health dangers facing Americans of all ages today.

The number of overdose deaths from opioid painkillers alone — opium-like drugs that include morphine and codeine — more than tripled from 1999 to 2006, to 13,800 deaths that year. *This despite the fact that the FDA increased the restrictions for consumer drug ads in 2005, especially for COX-2 painkillers like Celebrex and Bextra.*

In the past, most overdoses were due to illegal narcotics, such as heroin, with most deaths in big cities. But prescription painkillers have now surpassed both heroin and cocaine as the leading cause of fatal overdoses.

In addition, more than 700,000 people visit U.S. emergency rooms each year as a result of adverse drug reactions to all drugs, not just the opioids. Adverse drug reactions from drugs that are properly prescribed and properly administered cause about 106,000 deaths per year, making prescription drugs the fourth-leading cause of death in the U.S.

They kill more than twice as many Americans as HIV/AIDS or suicide.

Fewer die from accidents or diabetes than adverse drug reactions.
Compare all of this to the death toll from illegal drugs -- which is about 10,000 per year -- and you begin to see the magnitude of the problem that the pharmaceutical industry is propagating.

You’ve Been Mislead. What are You Going to Do About it?

It’s truly heart wrenching, but children and teens have become indoctrinated to believe that prescription drugs are safe, and are now using a variety of drugs recreationally, under the false assumption that they are not dangerous.

The desire to solve problems by taking drugs is a product of our culture, perpetuated by everyone, from drug manufacturers, to doctors, to government health officials, to you.

When you teach your child that the appropriate response to pain or discomfort is to take a pill, the obvious result is that he will seek comfort by taking drugs when faced with the challenges of adolescence.

The Baltimore Sun writes:

“According to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, prescription drugs are second to marijuana as the drug of choice for today's teens.

In fact, seven of the top 10 drugs used by 12th-graders were prescription drugs.

More than 40 percent of high school seniors reported that painkillers are "fairly" or "very" easy to get. They also reported that they believed that if they were to get caught, there was less shame attached to the use of prescription drugs than to street drugs.

This mirrors the perceptions of their parents, who when queried said that they felt prescription drugs were a safer alternative to drugs typically sold by a drug dealer.”

If this reflects your thinking, then you too have fallen for the false promises of the pharmaceutical industry, and the longer you cling to this dangerous attitude, the longer the harm will continue to be perpetuated.

Prescription Drugs Can be MORE Dangerous and Addictive than Street Drugs!

The first step toward meaningful change is realizing that prescription drugs are JUST as addictive and dangerous as illegal street drugs.
In many cases, they are identical. The only difference is their legal status.

For example, hydrocodone, a prescription opiate, is synthetic heroin -- indistinguishable from any other heroine as far as your brain and body is concerned.

So, if you’re hooked on hydrocodone, you are in fact a good-old-fashioned heroin addict. And if you keep this drug in an unlocked cabinet in your house, you are leaving your children an open invitation to experiment with something that is identical to a “street drug.”

Who cares that you got it from someone wearing a white coat, opposed to dark shades?

The morticians who prep tens of thousands of people for burial due to drug overdoses each year certainly don’t.

**How to Treat Your Pain without Causing More Grief**

It’s completely understandable to want to get rid of pain. However, please understand that there are many options to prescription painkillers that are much safer, even though they may require some patience.

Here are several guidelines that can help reduce, or potentially even eliminate, your pain, depending on its severity:

- **Start taking a high-quality, animal-based omega-3.** My personal favorite is krill oil. Omega-3 fats are precursors to mediators of inflammation called prostaglandins. (In fact, that is how anti-inflammatory painkillers work, they manipulate prostaglandins.)

- **Eliminate or radically reduce most grains and sugars from your diet.** Avoiding grains and sugars will lower your insulin and leptin levels. Elevated insulin and leptin levels are one of the most important reasons why inflammatory prostaglandins are produced. That is why stopping sugar and sweets is so important to controlling your pain and other types of chronic illnesses.

- **Optimize your production of vitamin D** by getting regular, appropriate sun exposure, which will work through a variety of different mechanisms to reduce your pain.
• **Retool your diet based on your body’s unique nutritional type.** Understanding your nutritional type is a tool I have seen work in thousands of patients to reduce their pain.

• **Use effective energy psychology tools**, such as the [Meridian Tapping Technique (MTT)](https://www.meridianconnection.com). MTT can address your previous emotional traumas that cause bioelectrical short circuiting, predisposing you to immune dysfunction.

As you can see from the list above, there is no "quick fix" to treating pain, but rather it is a lifestyle change that will be well worth the effort.

Please, if you take only one fact away from this article, let it be the importance of thinking twice before taking a prescription drug.

It is your body, not your doctor’s and not your pharmacist’s, so it is up to you to make the decision of what drugs to take, if any. Be SURE you are aware of the risks of any medication prescribed to you, and weigh them against any possible benefit. Then you can make a well-informed decision of whether it’s a risk you’re willing to take.

And as always, keep striving to [Take Control of Your Health](https://www.takecontrolofyourhealth.com) so that you require fewer doctor’s visits, and drugs, to stay in top condition.