

# POTENTIAL FOR NONMEDICAL USE AND DIVERSION OF PRESCRIPTION STIMULANT MEDICATIONS

Prescription stimulant medications, such as amfetamines and methylphenidate, are often prescribed for the treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

As with all prescription medications, proper use of stimulant medications is important. Stimulant medications can cause a number of possible side effects if not used correctly; for example, if taken at high doses or used when not prescribed they can cause serious health consequences.

It is important to handle prescription stimulant medications in a serious manner. They should never be sold or given away to other people.

## Improper use of stimulant medication

The improper use of stimulant medications can include nonmedical use and diversion:

### Nonmedical use

#### **Misuse**

Misuse describes any time that a prescription medication is used in a way other than the one prescribed; for example, someone taking an extra dose of their own medication or not taking doses as prescribed.

#### **Abuse**

Abuse means someone using a prescription medication to change the way they feel; for example to get 'high'. This can be dangerous for the person taking the medication and for those around that person.

### Diversion

Diversion describes the removal of medication, prescribed to treat a patient's medical condition, from its intended use. For example, someone giving their prescription medication or their child's prescription medication to someone else.

### ***If you have been prescribed stimulant medications you should...***

- Understand as much as possible about your treatment with stimulant medications
- Keep your medication in a safe place, even when you are at school, college or work
- Be aware of how much medication you should be taking and how often
- Only take your stimulant medication in the way your doctor prescribed
- Make sure no one else uses your stimulant medication. This can be done by counting your pills regularly
- Talk to your doctor straight away if you are worried about anything relating to your medication