

Reasons Not to Share Your Medications



Approximately 202,000 Missourians report using pain reliever for nonmedical reasons in the past year. A common way for individuals to obtain prescription drugs to misuse is from a friend or family member (SAMHSA, 2015). Overdose deaths involving prescription drugs has been increasing since the late 1990's. About 23,000 Americans die annually from an overdose involving prescription drugs (CDC, 2015).

1. Prescription drugs are not without side effects and risks.

Prescription drugs require a prescription because their side effects and risks of unintended effects are substantial enough to warrant monitoring by a doctor. Opioid pain medications can become addictive and can cause overdose - particularly if taken other than as prescribed.

2. A prescription is personal.

A prescription is provided to you from a doctor based on that doctor's clinical assessment of your medical history, age, weight, presenting symptoms, allergies, other medications you are taking, and other factors. It is customized for you and only you.

3. You are not a doctor.

You will not know how someone else will react to your prescription - even a close family member. They could experience side effects that you don't experience. Your prescription could interact with other medications they are taking. They could have allergies or intolerances that you do not know about. Sharing your prescription with someone else may cause harm.

4. It is illegal to share your prescription medications with someone else.

It can be a felony to share your medications including opioid painkillers with someone else. Sharing prescription drugs can result in a prison sentence. It is also illegal for someone else to possess your prescription medications.

5. You could be legally responsible for harm caused by your medications.

If you provide your prescription medication to someone else and that person is harmed or injured as a result of that medication, you can be held legally responsible for those injuries.



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