

‘Study Drugs’ And College Students: Monthly Patterns In Stimulant Initiation

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(NAPSA)—A myth on many college campuses is that “study drugs” help students succeed in preparing for and taking exams. Study drugs are typically prescription stimulants that people take to lose weight, to stay awake or to combat attention deficit disorders. However, research has shown that no drug can make a student smarter or help ace an exam.



Research shows no drug can make a student smarter.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), produced by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), collects information on substance use among civilian, noninstitutionalized adults in the United States. In 2013, 1.7 percent of full-time college students aged 18 to 22 had misused prescription stimulants in the month prior to being surveyed. Prescription stimulant misuse is when someone uses a drug without a prescription or simply for the feeling the drug caused.

Based on 2002–2013 NSDUH data, an annual average of 137,000 full-time college students misused prescription stimulants for the first time in the past 12 months. This means that over 12 months, an average of 400 students start misusing stimulants each day.

College students start misusing prescription stimulants mostly during the academic year, especially in April, November and December. In contrast, first use of alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana for college students peaked during summer break.

Parents, prevention specialists and college staff can help by being aware of how students may be misusing prescription stimulants for academic gain, particularly during the peak months that coincide with fall midterms and finals. For information about stimulant use, go to www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/report_2049/ShortReport-2049.html. Prevention information for students can be found at www.samhsa.gov/school-campus-health.

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