

## Signs of Prescription Drug Abuse

Signs of prescription drug use vary by person and type of drug. Some warning signs to watch for if you think someone you know may be experiencing a dependency to prescription medications include:

- **Usage Increase** - If someone you know seems to be increasing his/her dose over time, this is an indication that the amount they are taking is no longer providing them relief.
- **Change in Personality** - Shift in energy, mood, and concentration may occur as everyday responsibilities become secondary to the need for the relief the prescription provides.
- **Social Withdrawal** - A person experiencing a dependency problem may withdraw from family, friends, and other social interaction.
- **Ongoing Use** - Continued usage after a medical condition has improved.
- **Time Spent on Obtaining Prescriptions** - A dependent person will spend large amounts of time driving great distances and visiting multiple doctors to obtain the drugs.
- **Change in Daily Habits and Appearance** - Personal hygiene may diminish as a result of a drug addiction. Sleeping and eating habits change, and a person may have a constant cough, runny nose and red, glazed eyes.
- **Neglects Responsibilities** - May call in sick to work more often and neglect household chores and bills.
- **Increased Sensitivity** - Normal sights, sounds and emotions might become overly stimulating to the person.
- **Blackouts and Forgetfulness** - Person regularly forgets events that have just taken place and appears to be suffering from blackouts.
- **Defensiveness** - The abuser can become very defensive if they feel their secret is being discovered. They may lash out at simple requests or questions.
- **Increased need to borrow money.**

## Local Resources

- **Calvert Alliance Against Substance Abuse, Inc.**  
410-535-3733  
[www.co.cal.md.us/residents/health/caasa](http://www.co.cal.md.us/residents/health/caasa)
- **Calvert County Sheriff's Office**  
410-535-2800  
[www.co.cal.md.us/residents/safety/law](http://www.co.cal.md.us/residents/safety/law)
- **Calvert County State's Attorney's Office**  
410-535-1600, ext. 2369  
[www.calvertstatesattorney.org](http://www.calvertstatesattorney.org)
- **Maryland State Police, Barrack "U"**  
410-535-1400  
[www.mdsp.org](http://www.mdsp.org)
- **Calvert County Division of Solid Waste**  
410-326-0210  
[www.co.cal.md.us/residents/waste](http://www.co.cal.md.us/residents/waste)
- **Chesapeake Pharmacy**  
410-257-2050  
[www.chesapeakephcy.com](http://www.chesapeakephcy.com)
- **Calvert-Arundel Pharmacy**  
410-257-3700  
[www.calvert-arundelphcy.com](http://www.calvert-arundelphcy.com)
- **Department of Juvenile Services**  
443-550-6275  
[www.djs.state.md.us](http://www.djs.state.md.us)



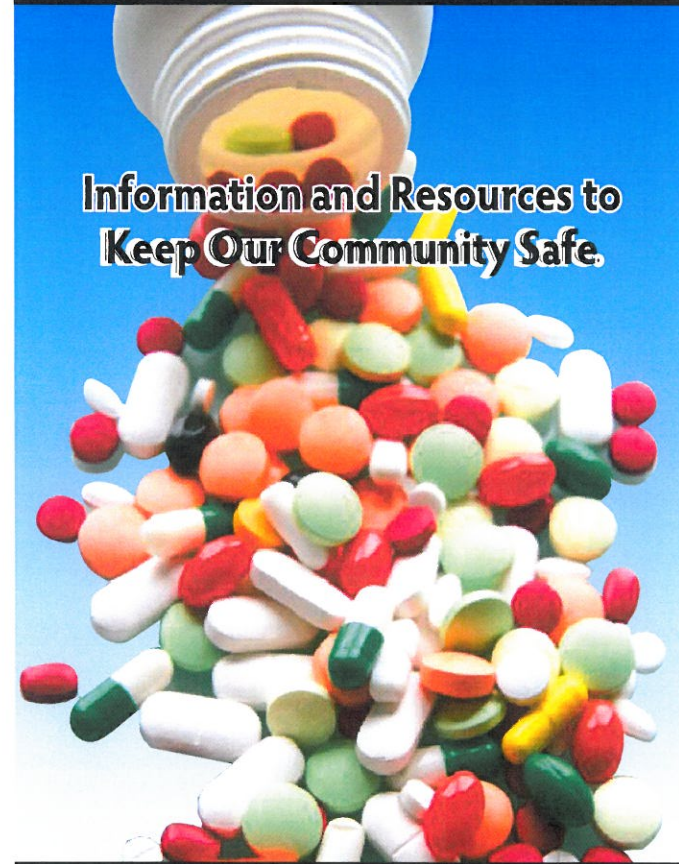
### Helpful Websites

[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)  
[www.smarxtdisposal.net](http://www.smarxtdisposal.net)  
[www.talkaboutrx.org](http://www.talkaboutrx.org)  
[www.bemedwise.org](http://www.bemedwise.org)  
[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)  
[www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov)  
[www.drugs.com](http://www.drugs.com)  
[www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com)

# Prescription Drug Abuse

## Proper Disposal Methods

Information and Resources to  
Keep Our Community Safe.



### Sponsoring Agencies:



## What prescription drugs are being abused?

- Opioids - Also known as narcotic analgesics. Used to treat pain, opioids are the most commonly abused prescription drugs. Examples include Morphine, Codeine, Oxycontin, Vicodin, and Demerol.
- Central nervous system depressants. Commonly used to treat anxiety, panic attacks, and sleep disorders. Examples include Nembutal, Valium, and Xanax.
- Central nervous system stimulants. Commonly used to treat the sleeping disorder narcolepsy and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Examples include Ritalin and Dexedrine.

## How are they abused?

Abusers will alter the manner in which the drug is taken to enhance or speed-up the absorption of the drug into their system. Injection and snorting are often used by abusers.

Many abusers use just for the "high" and increase their use overtime to achieve the same high. In some cases, the abuser will switch to heroin because they can obtain the same "high" at a lower cost.

## How do abusers acquire the pills?

- Stealing from family members or friends.
- Fraudulent prescriptions.
- Doctor shopping.
- Over-prescribing.
- On-line.
- Pharmacy theft.

## How do I dispose of unused prescription drugs?

Calvert County residents are encouraged to utilize the following options when disposing of unused or expired prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications.

- **Over the counter medications and non-narcotic prescriptions:**
  1. Hazardous Waste Disposal events held four times a year at designated county landfills. Call 410-326-0210 for scheduled dates and times.
  2. Chesapeake Pharmacy and Calvert Arundel Pharmacy are approved drop-off locations for non-narcotic prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs and supplements.
- **Narcotic prescription drugs:**
  1. Sheriff's Office 24/7 secure lock-box located at Sheriff's Office, 30 Church Street, Prince Frederick.
  2. Hazardous Waste Disposal events held four times a year at designated county landfills. Call 410-326-0210 for scheduled dates and times.

Disposing of prescriptions in household trash or by flushing them can damage septic systems and ground water, but we understand the need for immediate disposal in some cases. Therefore, if you must dispose of your medications in the trash, please follow these steps:

- Remove medicine from original container.
- Conceal or remove personal information, including the RX number, from the container.
- Mix the medicine with a messy substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter.
- Place the mixture in a nondescript container with a lid or sealable bag and discard in the trash.

SMARxT Disposal has a helpful video that provides step by step instructions for those needing to dispose of medications in their household trash. The video can be viewed at <http://www.smarxtdisposal.net>.

## Criminal Penalties

- CR 5-601 - Possession of CDS - Anyone possessing any controlled dangerous substance without a valid prescription: 4 years and/or \$25,000 fine. This also includes attempting to obtain a CDS by "fraud, deceit or misrepresentation", or by counterfeiting or altering a prescription.
- CR 5-602 - Distribution of CDS or possession with intent to distribute. For schedule I or II narcotics, which includes Morphine, Codeine in high dosages, Methadone, Oxycodone (including Percocet and Oxycontin), and Hydrocodone (including Vicodin), the penalty is 20 years and/or \$25,000 for a first offense, and is also subject to mandatory penalties as follows:
  - 10 years w/out parole for a second offense.
  - 25 years w/out parole for a third offense.
  - 40 years w/out parole for a fourth offense.
- For any other drugs the penalty is five (5) years and/or \$15,000 for a first offense. It can also be doubled for a subsequent offense and has a mandatory minimum two (2) years for a second offense.
- CR 5-606 - Prohibits someone from making, issuing, passing or possessing a false, counterfeit or altered prescription for CDS with intent to distribute. Penalties are the same as for CR 5-602.