

Prescription Drug Safety: Know the truth™

Curriculum Guide

COURSE MISSION

This course intends to empower high school students with the skills and knowledge to make safe and healthy decisions about prescription drugs through a public health and evidence-based approach.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will educate students about the potential dangers of misusing prescription drugs and the impact misuse can have on their physical and mental health, their relationships and communities, and their future. Through personal stories and interactive scenarios, students will learn about what constitutes appropriate use, proper storage and disposal, misuse and addiction (or substance use disorder), and treatment and recovery. By developing skills and strategies to prevent prescription drug misuse, students will become confident, empowered, and safe users of prescription drugs. They will also learn how to support others in need, including specific steps and instructions for responding to an overdose situation. Last but not least, the final lesson of the course is designed to raise awareness about the fentanyl crisis related to the rise of counterfeit pills in the United States, empowering students to stay safe and help others do the same.

COURSE OVERVIEW

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Prescription Drugs Overview	Students learn about three major prescription drug categories and how they can affect the body, including their side effects.
Principles of Addiction	Students explore how addiction can affect the brain and body.
Recovery Stories	Students review personal recovery stories and dig deeper into how addiction can affect a person's life.
How to Read Prescription Labels	Students learn about how to read prescription labels for safe and appropriate use.
Proper Storage and Disposal	Students explore how to safely store and dispose of unused prescription drugs.
Safe and Unsafe Use	Students experiment with interactive scenarios and learn about what constitutes safe and unsafe use of prescription drugs.
Risks of Recreational	Students review risks of non-clinical or recreational use of prescription drugs.

How to Respond to Peer Pressure	Students engage in an interactive scenario and learn about how to effectively respond to pressure to misuse prescription drugs.
Treatment and Recovery	Students learn about what treatment and recovery look like through a personal story.
Self Check-In	Students have an opportunity to check in with their own prescription drug use and determine if they need help.
Warning Signs	Students learn the warning signs of three common types of prescription drugs: opioids, depressants, and stimulants.
Resisting Barriers to Help	Through quick self-rating surveys, students reflect on what would stop them from reaching out or encourage them to help others. The feedback and tips that follow will empower students to offer support if they think someone they care about is struggling with drug misuse or addiction.
Responding to Overdose	Students review the four important steps to responding to an overdose, so they can be prepared by knowing what to do.
Fentanyl Facts	Students explore some of the basic facts about fentanyl.
Counterfeit Pills	Students learn about what counterfeit pills are, why they are dangerous, and what they can do to stay safe.
Fentanyl Overdose	Students learn about how to respond to an overdose situation specifically involving fentanyl.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Pre-survey	The Basics	Science of Addiction	Understanding Prescriptions	Safe Use	Refusal Skills	Addiction, Treatment, & Recovery	Supporting Others	Fentanyl—Fast and Fatal	Post-survey
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The course is ungated. Students can take as many lessons as they want in whatever order they like, although completing all lessons from The Basics to Fentanyl—Fast and Fatal is recommended for deeper understanding. Each lesson is designed to measure learning gains with pre- and post-assessment questions.

DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

Each lesson in this course ends with a “Resources” page, where students can get more information on seeking help if they need support related to prescription drug misuse. Included in the resources are [National Helpline](#), [Substance Abuse Treatment Referral Locator](#), [Narcotics Anonymous](#), [Crisis Text Line](#), [The Trevor Project](#), [NEXT Distro](#), [the Drug Enforcement Administration’s resource page](#), and [the Food and Drug Administration’s flush list for certain medicines](#). These resources are also available in a menu panel throughout the online course experience, providing access at any point in the course.

Lesson 1: The Basics

Students become familiar with the basics of prescription drug misuse.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Identify the common "street" and brand names of the 3 major prescription drug categories.

- Describe the positive effects on those with valid needs and prescription.
- Illustrate the potential negative effects on the brain and body if the drug is misused.
- Explain the possible legal consequences of misusing prescription drugs.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Prescription Drug Misuse & Prevention	The video gives an overview of the lesson and forms the foundation for understanding the benefits and risks of prescription drugs.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
What Are Prescription Drugs?	Students learn about what prescription drugs are.
What Is Prescription Drug "Misuse"?	Students review what prescription drug misuse means.
Types of Prescription Drugs	Students explore three types of prescription drugs: opioids, depressants, and stimulants.
Opioids	Students dig deeper into opioids, including their medical use, how they work, their side effects, results of misuse, illegally produced opioids, and opioid brands and street names.
Depressants	Students dig deeper into depressants, including their medical use, how they work, their side effects, results of misuse, and depressant brands and street names.
Stimulants	Students dig deeper into stimulants, including their medical use, how they work, their side effects, results of misuse, non-clinical use, and stimulant brands and street names.
Legal Risks and Consequences	Students explore legal risks and consequences of misusing prescription drugs.
Driving and Prescription Drugs	Students learn about the dangers and consequences of driving under the influence (DUI).
Prescription Drugs: A Double-Edged Sword	The lesson gives a summary of the learning and reinforces the importance of proper, safe use of prescription drugs.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 2: Science of Addiction

Students explore how addiction, or substance use disorder, can affect the brain and body—knowledge that can ultimately help prevent the development of a substance use disorder.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Explain that addiction is a clinical diagnosis that anyone can develop.
- Describe how drugs impact the brain and can lead to addiction problems.
- Define terms such as "withdrawal" and "tolerance" and their relationship to addiction.
- Describe how people can manage their addiction and sustain their recovery in a supportive environment.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
What Is Addiction?	The lesson gives an overview of what addiction is.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Principles of Addiction	Students learn about how using and/or misusing prescription drugs can affect the brain and body, which can lead to addiction.
Drugs Affect People Differently	Students gain a deeper understanding of how a person could experience addiction.
Addiction and Recovery	The lesson introduces three personal stories about addiction and recovery.
Jordan's Story	Students dig deeper into Jordan's story and learn about how he managed addiction and sustains recovery.
Radhika's Story	Students dig deeper into Radhika's story and learn about how she managed addiction and sustains recovery.
Tom's Story	Students dig deeper into Tom's story and learn about how he managed addiction and sustains recovery.
Support and Recovery	The lesson gives a summary of the learning and reiterates how support from others and access to treatment programs can help people in recovery
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 3: Understanding Prescriptions

Through a case study, students become familiar with properly reading a prescription label and disposing of unused drugs.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Explain the importance of following prescription instructions precisely.
- Describe the factors that doctors consider when writing a prescription for an individual.
- Read and understand prescription labels, including caution or risk statements.
- Store and dispose of unused drugs safely and appropriately.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Reading Prescription Labels: An Important Life Skill	The lesson gives an overview of why reading prescription labels and following the instructions are important.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Reading Prescription Labels: Part 1	Students explore who the drug is for on the example prescription label—including the patient's name and legal notice.
What Should Ashley Do about Her Pills?	Quick Q&As reinforce students' knowledge of reading and understanding prescription labels.
Reading Prescription Labels: Part 2	Students explore drug details on the example prescription label—including drug name and strength, pill manufacturer or distributor, expiration date, and physical description of pill.
Find the Red Flag!	A quick Q&A reinforces students' knowledge of reading and understanding prescription labels.
Reading Prescription Labels: Part 3	Students explore how to take the drug on the example prescription label—including directions and refills.
When/How Should Ashley Take the Pill?	Quick Q&As reinforce students' knowledge of reading and understanding prescription labels.
Reading Prescription Labels: Part 4	Students explore things about the drug to be aware of on the example prescription label—including warnings and interactions.
Is It Okay If Ashley...?	Quick Q&As reinforce students' knowledge of reading and understanding prescription labels.
Reading Prescription Labels: Part 5	Students explore other important information on the example prescription label—including contact and disposal.
What Should Ashley Do About Leftover Pills?	A quick Q&A reinforces students' knowledge of reading and understanding prescription labels.
Proper Storage and Disposal	Students review why it is important to properly store and dispose of unused prescription drugs.
Proper Storage	Students dig deeper into proper storage and learn about how they can safely store prescription drugs.
Proper Disposal	Students dig deeper into proper disposal and learn about how they can safely dispose of prescription drugs.
Be Informed	The lesson gives a summary of the learning and empowers students to always read and understand prescription labels.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 4: Safe Use

Students engage in interactive scenarios where they guide characters to make safe choices regarding prescription drug use.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Summarize why mixing prescriptions with alcohol is dangerous.
- Explain why using drugs for something other than the medication was prescribed for is unsafe.
- Illustrate the importance of sharing questions or concerns about prescription drugs with healthcare professionals.
- Make safe and informed choices in situations that involve prescription drug use.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Using Prescriptions Safely	The lesson gives an overview of the potential challenges of using prescriptions safely.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Case Study: Veronica's Night Out	Students explore Veronica's situation and decide what she should do in an interactive scenario.
Feedback	Students are directed to a customized feedback page for their choice and learn about why mixing a stimulant and a depressant is dangerous.
Case Study: Anik's Personal Prescription	Students explore Anik's situation and decide what he should do in an interactive scenario.
Feedback	Students are directed to a customized feedback page for their choice and learn about harmful impacts of self-medication.
Case Study: Li's Concerns	Students explore Li's situation and decide what he should do in an interactive scenario.
Feedback	Students are directed to a customized feedback page for their choice and learn about the importance of communicating concerns about prescription drugs with healthcare professionals.
Staying Safe	The lesson gives a summary of the learning and reinforces what students can do to keep themselves safe and healthy.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 5: Refusal Skills

Students learn about the risks of the recreational use of prescription drugs and strategies for effectively refusing to misuse them through interactive scenarios.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Articulate that most students do not misuse prescription drugs and would support a friend's decision not to misuse drugs.
- Describe the potential side effects of taking prescription drugs outside of a prescription.
- Resist peer pressure and other influences to take prescription drugs outside a medical professional's advice.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Pressure to Misuse	The lesson gives an overview of why people may be pressured to misuse prescription drugs.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Case Study: The Study Group	Students review a scenario where characters feel the pressure to misuse prescription drugs.
What's on Everyone's Mind?	Students have an opportunity to explore each character's thought process and fact-check their concerns and questions.
Ellie's Thoughts	With a quick Q&A, students learn about how misusing a prescription drug even one time can have consequences.
Miranda's Thoughts	With a quick Q&A, students learn that most students don't misuse prescription drugs.
Manny's Thoughts	With a quick Q&A, students learn about how dangerous misusing prescription stimulants can be.
Rachel's Thoughts	With a quick Q&A, students learn that misusing prescription stimulants doesn't help their grades.
Responding to Pressure	Students engage in an interactive scenario where they can make a safe and healthy decision for a character.
Rachel's Response: Part 1	Students decide how Rachel should respond to Jax, who is offering her a prescription pill.
Feedback	Students are directed to a customized feedback page for their choice and learn about how to refuse prescription drug misuse effectively.
Rachel's Response: Part 2	Students decide how Rachel should respond to Jax, who is offering her a prescription pill one more time.
Feedback	Students are directed to a customized feedback page for their choice and learn about how they can respond to pressure in a way that helps others.
Making Choices	The lesson gives a summary of the learning and empowers students to speak up and offer their support.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 6: Addiction, Treatment, and Recovery

Students learn that treatment works and recovery is possible from a real-life story and check in with themselves about their own prescription drug use.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Illustrate how treatment and medications can help people in recovery.
- Describe warning signs about one's own prescription drug use.
- Seek assistance if experiencing a problem with prescription drugs.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Getting Help	The lesson gives an overview of how treatment can help people in need.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Rebekkah's Story	Students explore a personal recovery story of opioid addiction.
Video 1: Developing an Addiction	This video shows how Rebekkah became addicted to opioid painkillers.
Video 2: Treatment for Addiction	This video illustrates how clinical treatment and medications helped Rebekkah in her recovery.
Video 3: Recovery—A New Start	This video portrays how Rebekkah continued to work on her longterm recovery with the help of medications.
Video 4: One Year Later	This video reinforces that treatment works and that recovery is possible.
What Treatment and Recovery Look Like	Students learn about how evidence-based practices can effectively treat opioid addiction.
Do I Need Help?	With a series of questions, students have an opportunity to check in with themselves about their own prescription drug use and determine if they need help.
Addiction, Treatment, and Recovery	The lesson gives a summary of the learning and reiterates that anyone can develop an addiction, treatment works, and recovery is possible.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 7: Supporting Others

Students become familiar with how to support others in situations involving prescription drug misuse and overdose.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Identify signs of prescription drug misuse, addiction, and overdose.
- Resist barriers to action when witnessing a situation involving drug misuse.
- Illustrate how to support others and call for help in a potential overdose situation.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Support: Key to Recovery	The lesson gives an overview of how support from others can help people in recovery.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Dangers and Risks of Misuse	Students review why misusing prescription drugs can be dangerous, including the risks of fentanyl-containing illegal drugs.
Warning Signs	Students learn about common warning signs of prescription drug misuse.
Reaching Out	Students reflect on what would stop them from trying to help if they thought someone they care about was struggling with drug misuse.
Offering Support	Students reflect on what would encourage them to try and help if they thought someone they care about was struggling with drug misuse.
Overdose: What to Know	Students review the importance of being prepared and knowledgeable about how to respond to an overdose situation.
4 Steps to Responding to an Overdose	Students explore the four steps of responding to an overdose.
Step 1: Check for Signs	Students explore the signs of overdose.
Step 2: Call 911	Students learn about the most important step—calling 911—and review what information they should give.
Step 3: Administer Aid	Students learn about how to help the person overdosing, including the use of naloxone.
Step 4: Stay with Them	Students review what else they can do to help until help arrives.
Finding Support after an Overdose	Students reflect on how life-changing and traumatic an overdose can be for both people who have overdosed and those who have supported them, learning more about how they can all benefit from reaching out and seeking help.
You Can Be the Help	The lesson gives a summary of the importance of supporting others in situations involving drug misuse, addiction, and overdose.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.

Lesson 8: Fentanyl—Fast and Fatal

Students learn about the facts, risks, and dangers of illegally made fentanyl and counterfeit pills that contain fentanyl.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Summarize basic facts about fentanyl, including its types and effects.
- Illustrate overdose and poisoning risks of counterfeit pills containing illegally made fentanyl.
- Identify healthy strategies to stay safe and support others in the fentanyl crisis.

ACTIVITY TOPIC	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
The Truth about My Brother's Overdose Death	The lesson kicks off with a personal story about an overdose death that involves fentanyl.
Before You Start	This page serves as a sensitive content warning and lets students know there are resources that can offer them support.
What You Know	Pre-assessment questions measure what students already know. Students won't get a score because this is not a quiz or a test.
Fentanyl 101	Students learn what fentanyl is and review more facts about it.
Fentanyl Types	Students review two types of fentanyl: pharmaceutical fentanyl and illegal fentanyl.
Fentanyl Names	Students learn about brands and street names of fentanyl.
Fentanyl Forms	Students explore two main forms of fentanyl: liquid fentanyl and powdered fentanyl.
Dangers of Counterfeit Pills	Students learn about what makes counterfeit pills dangerous.
Identifying Counterfeit Pills	Students explore different-looking pills that contain fentanyl.
Fentanyl Overdose	Students review how important it can be to be knowledgeable about and prepared for an overdose situation.
Responding to an Overdose	Students learn about how they can respond to an overdose that involves fentanyl-containing drugs.
When One Pill Kills	The character whose story has kicked off this lesson wraps it up.
Stay Safe, Stay Vigilant!	The lesson gives a summary of the importance of staying safe and being prepared in the fentanyl crisis.
Resources	The lesson provides a list of resources students can refer to if and when they want to get more information or reach out for help.
Quiz/Your Score	Post-assessment questions measure learning gains from the lesson. Students need at least a 70% to pass.