

[IMAGE]

Prescription Overload

By Editorial Staff

Despite increasing evidence and public awareness of the dangers of prescription drugs, both in terms of side effects and in some cases, the potential for abuse, prescription drug use continues to escalate. According to a study from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, which compared data from 1999-2000 with data from 2011-2012 as part of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey ([NHANES](#)), 59 percent of U.S. adults reported prescription drug use in 2011-12, up 8 percent from 1999-2000. In addition, polypharmacy (use of five or more prescription drugs) increased from 8.2 percent to 15 percent as of 2011-12.

Perhaps more disturbing, of 18 drug classes utilized by at least 2.5 percent of the population, prescription drug use increased in more than 50 percent of those classes (11).

prescription - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Drug classes showing increased use included antidepressants, muscle relaxants, proton-pump inhibitors (used to reduce gastric acid, among other functions) and anti-hyperlipidemic drugs (used to combat high cholesterol).

[Click here](#) to read the abstract from this revealing study, and [click here](#) to review important questions to ask your doctor at every visit - including what to ask before filling a prescription.

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