



# Did You Know?

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**ACADEMIC DOPING:** Is there a pill on the market that can make you smarter? If so, would you take it? Thousands of college students are doing just that, but is it safe?

College students across the nation are abusing prescription stimulant drugs, which has recently been termed "academic doping." These "study drugs" or "smart drugs" as they are sometimes referred to, are nothing more than a prescription stimulant prescribed to those who suffer from attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). You may know these medications as Ritalin or Adderall.

Prescription stimulants are prescribed for individuals who suffer from attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or attention deficit disorder (ADD). These drugs affect the chemicals in the brain that contribute to hyperactivity and impulse control. Individuals with these disorders use the medications to help them feel more relaxed, more in control of their actions, and may help them concentrate better. However, for those who abuse these drugs and do not suffer from an attention disorder, it has the opposite effect. Abusing these drugs can make the individual feel very stimulated, awake, and alert. Thus, college students abuse such drugs so that they can stay awake and alert to study for long periods of time.

## What You Should Know:

- One third of college students are abusing prescription stimulants.
- Many parents are unaware their child is abusing prescription stimulant drugs.
- Schools however, are more aware of the problem, yet little is being done to address the issue.
- Students from all around the country are abusing these drugs, from students at top name schools, to small community colleges.
- These drugs seem harmless because they are prescribed by a doctor, but they become habit forming.
- These drugs are sometimes crushed up and ingested via the nasal cavity.
- Abuse of these stimulants can cause major health issues such as heart palpitations, heart attacks, increased anxiety, and a possibility of psychiatric breakdowns, including suicide.
- These drugs also have the very real possibility of addiction.
- Students are not only using these stimulant drugs to study, but they are also abusing them for party purposes.

## Parental Warning Signs

- Changes in behavior or personality
- Trouble sleeping
- Irritability
- Jittery or nervous behavior
- Cardiac problems
- Mental health issues such as anxiety or depression

Source: [www.nbcnews.com](http://www.nbcnews.com)