

Understanding Drugs & Medicines



Chapter 19

What Are Drugs?

◆ Substances that causes a change in a person's physical or psychological state

◆ **Medicines**

- Drugs that are used to treat or prevent diseases
- Classified into 4 categories
 - ◆ Help prevent disease (Vaccines & antitoxins)
 - ◆ Fight pathogens (Antibiotics, antivirals & antifungals)
 - ◆ Relieve pain & other symptoms
 - ◆ Manage chronic conditions, help maintain or restore health & regulate body's systems
 - Allergy, body-regulating, antidepressant, antipsychotic, cancer treatment

Illegal Drugs

Drugs that
are mind
altering &
have no
medical
use



How Drugs Enter Body

- ◆ Inhalation
- ◆ Injections
- ◆ Oral
- ◆ Topical application
- ◆ Transdermal patches



Possible Problems with Any Kind Of Medicines

1. Allergic Reactions

- Most serious risk
- Mild itchiness to severe skin rash
- Anaphylactic shock = most serious reaction!
 - ◆ Severe allergic response of the entire body
 - ◆ Signs: Itching all over; swelling (especially mouth & throat); wheezing or difficulty breathing; pounding heart; fainting & unconsciousness
 - ◆ Immediate attention!!

Possible Problems with Any Kind Of Medicines

2. Side Effects

- Diarrhea, Drowsiness, Bleeding of the stomach, Ulcers

3. Drug Interactions

- When a drug reacts with another drug, food or dietary supplement
- Labeled on OTC
- Let doctor know of any medicines currently taking
- Ask questions about new prescription

Concerns with any type of drugs

◆ Addiction:

- Drug Use-> Tolerance-> Dependence-> Addiction

◆ Withdrawals

- Symptoms are opposite of drug effects
- This is why it's hard to quit

◆ Dangers

- Biological changes in brain possibly permanent

Treatment

- ◆ Helps a person to stop using the drugs
- ◆ Counseling to understand why they became addicted
- ◆ Helps cope with life after drugs



Prescription Medicines

- ◆ Dispensed only with a doctor's written approval
- ◆ Information on a prescription:
 - Dose
 - When you should take the medicine (ex: for pain)
 - How often you should take it (every 8 hrs)
 - Length of time you should take it (for 2 weeks)
 - Comes with an drug information sheet
 - ◆ Side effects & drug interactions with other medicines

◆ Many people believe prescription drugs are safer than illegal drugs because a doctor prescribed them....they are NOT!!

◆ More people die accidentally from prescription drugs each year than all types of illegal drugs combined

◆ Combining pain killers &/or anti-anxiety drugs with alcohol multiplies the effects & can stop your breathing

Symptoms of Prescription Overdose

- ◆ Abnormal or non-reactive pupil size
- ◆ Agitation, violent or aggressive behavior
- ◆ Convulsions, tremors
- ◆ Delusional or paranoid behavior
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Drowsiness, unconsciousness
- ◆ Hallucinations
- ◆ Nausea & vomiting
- ◆ Staggering or unsteadiness
- ◆ Sweating or extremely dry, hot skin



Prescription Drugs Dangers

Click on the above to title to watch the video

OTC Medicines



- ◆ Choosing an OTC
 - Decide what will work
 - Read label before buying & using
 - Generic or brand name
- ◆ Misuses of OTC
 - Too much, taking twice
- ◆ Long term can cover-up **BIGGER** problem
 - OTC's treat symptoms, **NOT** disease