

Drug abuse prevention

October is drug abuse prevention month

When people hear drug abuse, it's not uncommon to lean towards the illicit drugs such as heroin, cocaine or methamphetamines. While these do have a significant incidence of drug overdoses, they aren't the only ones to be concerned about. Drug overdoses have contributed to more than 72,000 deaths in 2017 and more than 19,000 of those were due to pain relievers. While the reasons they are abused vary from having legitimate medical complaints like pain to wanting to feel "high", prescription overdoses have increased. Like many things, the key to prevention is knowledge:

- Talk with your kids, let them know that drugs that are prescribed may be ok, it's important that they use them only how the physician orders.
- Observe children when taking any medication.
- Do not take medications that aren't prescribed to you. Not only is this illegal, but it can be harmful for your health.
- Taking drugs in a manner inconsistent with the prescription, such as snorting oral medication or taking too many.
- Do not change the dosing regimen without talking to a doctor first.
- Do not do illicit drugs. These are often full of other substances that are far more harmful such as battery acid, drain cleaner and antifreeze.

If you or a loved one exhibits signs of an emergency call 911 immediately. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher, they will be able to assist you until medical help arrives. Drug overdoses require medical care and will not simply go away on their own. You can find more information on how to prevent prescription overdoses by going to <http://county.pueblo.org/government/county/department/city-county-health-department/prevent-opioid-misuse>