

Nonmedical Use of Drugs among Young Adults: Who's Using Prescription Stimulants?

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Using data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2010), this study explored to what extent young adults abuse Adderall and investigated factors associated with students' nonmedical use of Adderall as prescription stimulants. The total sample of 19,302 young adults aged 18-25 was analyzed. The descriptive statistics present that about 11.3 percent of young adults had ever used Adderall without a prescription. The logistic regression results show that all else being equal, those with a college education were more likely to use Adderall for nonmedical reasons than young adults without a high school diploma. The findings indicated that all else being equal, full-time enrolled college students were more likely to experience nonmedical Adderall use than those who were not enrolled in college. The logistic regression results also show that all else being equal, those living in large or small metropolitan areas were more likely to experience nonmedical use of Adderall than were young adults residing in non-metropolitan areas. It is noteworthy that all else being equal, young adults were more likely to use Adderall when they used other prescription stimulants. For example, when they used methamphetamine, they were 263% more likely to experience Adderall use than those who never used methamphetamine. Similarly, when they used diet pills and when they used Ritalin, young adults were 326% and 3,949 %, respectively, more likely to experience Adderall for nonmedical reasons than those who had never used such prescription stimulants. In addition, the results show that all else being equal, young adults, who were dependent on any illicit drugs, were 362% more likely to experience nonmedical use of Adderall than those who were not dependent on any illicit drugs. This study also found that ethnicity/racial difference had a statistically significant effect on nonmedical Adderall use among young adults, indicating that all else being equal, Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and young adults with other race were less likely to experience nonmedical use of Adderall than their White counterparts.

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