

Emergency Room Visits for ADHD Drugs More Than Doubled from 2005 to 2010



Emergency room visits involving attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) drugs more than doubled from 2005 to 2010, according to a new government report.

The number of visits involving ADHD medications that were used non-medically almost tripled during this period.

The report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) found in 2005, there were 13,379 emergency room visits related to ADHD drugs. Such visits jumped to 31,244 in 2010, Newswise reports. Non-medical use of ADHD medications rose from 5,212 in 2005, to 15,585 in 2010.

Other pharmaceutical drugs were involved in nearly half (45 percent) of emergency room visits involving ADHD stimulant medications and about one fifth involved illicit drugs (21 percent) or alcohol (19 percent).

The report found emergency room visits for nonmedical use have not increased among children and adolescents, but they have increased among adults aged 18 or older. "ADHD medications, when properly prescribed and used can be of enormous benefit to those suffering from ADHD, but like any other medication they can pose serious risks – particularly when they are misused," SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde said in a news release. "This study indicates that a better job has to be done alerting all segments of society – not just the young – that misuse of these medications is extremely dangerous."