

Six Percent of Teens Report Using Psychiatric Medicine



A new government report finds about six percent of U.S. teens say they use a psychiatric medicine as drug therapy, similar to the rate 10 years ago.

Boys are more likely than girls to be prescribed stimulants such as Ritalin for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), while girls are more likely to be given antidepressants, Bloomberg reports.

ADHD drugs and antidepressants were the most commonly prescribed medicines for teens between 2005 and 2010, according to the report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A survey of teens conducted between 1988 and 1994 found 1 percent of teens were prescribed psychiatric medications. A decade later, 6.8 percent of teens reported using psychiatric drugs to treat a mental health condition, a rate that has held steady since, according to Bruce Jonas, an author of the new study.

He noted prescriptions for psychiatric drugs may have risen because of an increased awareness of mental illness among teens, and the availability of new treatments for depression and ADHD.

The new survey found about half of teens who reported using psychiatric drugs had seen a mental health professional in the past year. Most of the teens surveyed said they were taking no more than one psychiatric drug.

The findings are published in a [National Center for Health Statistics Data Brief](#).

To read NCADD's "**Understanding Drugs and Drug Dependence**", [please click here](#).