

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

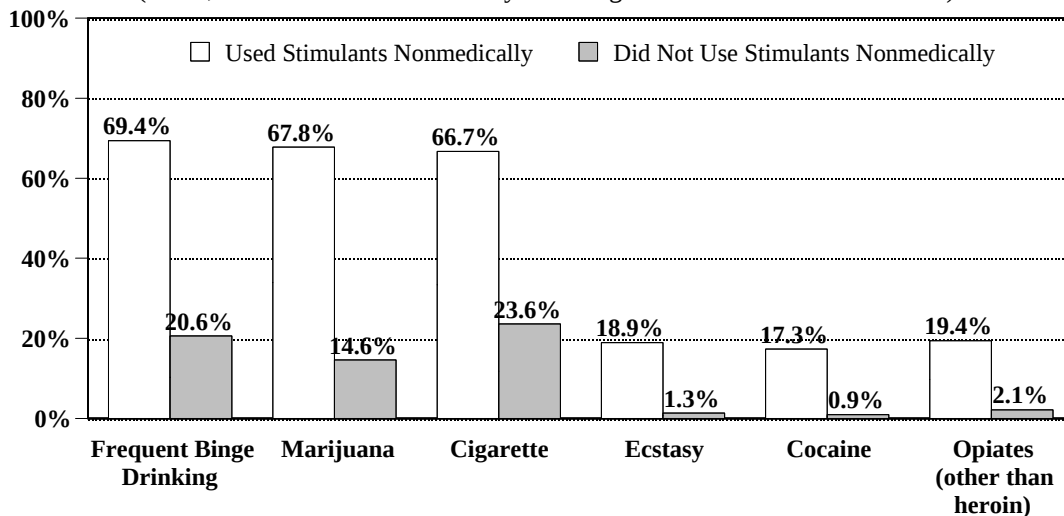
University of Maryland, College Park

College Students Who Use Stimulants Non-Medically Are Substantially More Likely to Use Other Drugs

Approximately 6.9% of U.S. college students have used prescription stimulants (i.e. Ritalin®, Dexedrine®, or Adderall®) for nonmedical reasons at least once in their lifetime, according to data from the 2001 College Alcohol Study. Nonmedical stimulant users were substantially more likely to report using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, even after controlling for relevant factors.* For example, slightly more than two-thirds of past year non-medical stimulant users reported using marijuana in the past month, compared to 14.6% of college students who had not used prescription stimulants nonmedically. Nonmedical stimulant users were also more likely to drive after drinking or be a passenger in a car with a drunk driver (data not shown). The authors note that “the higher rates of substance use and other risky behaviors found among non-medical prescription stimulant users may be an indication that the non-medical use of prescription stimulants is part of a larger cluster of problem behaviors among college students” (p. 103).

Percentage of College Students Reporting Frequent Binge Drinking and Past Month Substance Use, by Past Year Non-Medical Stimulant Use, 2001

(N=10,904 students at 119 U.S. 4-year colleges and universities in 39 states)



*Frequent binge drinking is defined as the consumption of at least five drinks in a row for men (four for women) on three or more occasions during the previous two weeks.

*Odds ratios (not shown) were adjusted for gender, race, age, living arrangement, parental education, fraternity/sorority membership, grade point average, geographical region, commuter status, and college admissions selectivity.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from McCabe, S.E., Knight, J.R., Teter, C.J., Wechsler, H. “Non-medical Use of Prescription Stimulants Among US College Students: Prevalence and Correlates from a National Survey,” *Addiction* 100(1):96-106, 2005.

• 301-405-9770 (voice) • 301-403-8342 (fax) • CESAR@cesar.umd.edu • www.cesar.umd.edu •

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