

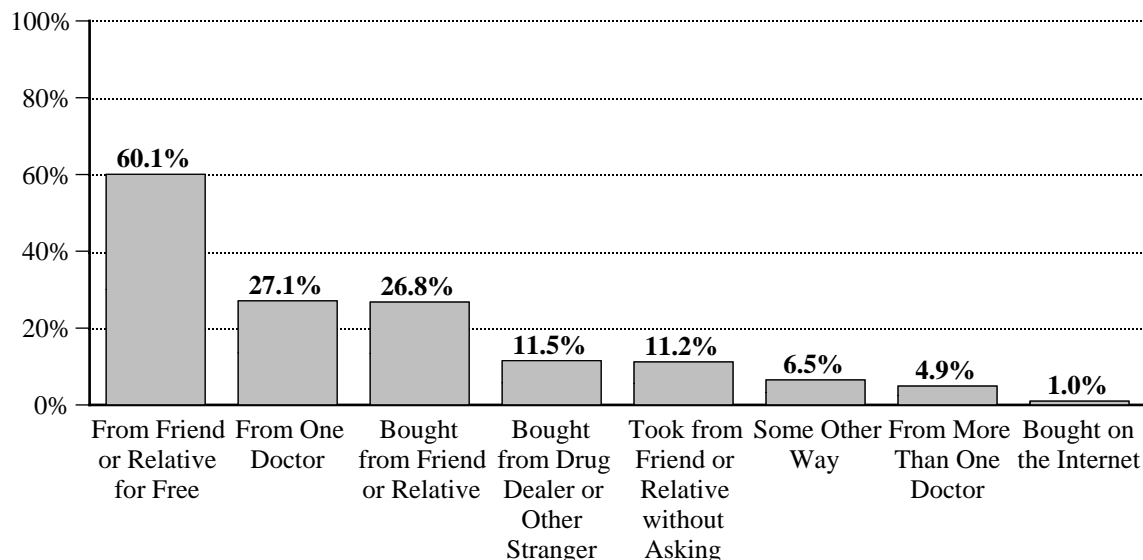
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Majority of Nonmedical Users of Prescription Pain Relievers Get the Drugs from Friends/Relatives or Doctors

In 2010, 5.1 million people ages 12 and older reported the nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers in the past month, according to data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). The majority of these users—60.1%—reported that they obtained the pain relievers free from a friend or relative. The other most commonly mentioned methods were obtaining them from a doctor (27.1% from one doctor and another 4.9% from more than one doctor) and buying them from a friend or relative (26.8%). Among those who used pain relievers nonmedically and indicated that they obtained the drugs from a friend or relative for free, 76.7% indicated that the friend or relative obtained the drugs from just one doctor (data not shown). Only 1% reported buying their prescription pain relievers on the internet. These findings suggest that improving both patient education as well as doctors' monitoring of patients may help reduce the diversion of prescription pain relievers for nonmedical use.

Method of Obtaining Prescription Pain Relievers Reported by Past Month Nonmedical Users Ages 12 or Older (2009 & 2010 Combined Annual Averages)



NOTES: Percentages sum to more than 100% because respondents could indicate multiple sources from which they obtained pain relievers for past month nonmedical use. The response options "Wrote a fake prescription" and "Stole from doctor's office, clinic, hospital, or pharmacy" were reported by less than one percent of those who used prescription pain relievers nonmedically in the past year and are not shown in the figure above.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*, 2011. Available online at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/nsduhLatest.htm>.