Safe Use of Rx Drugs

Navy’s drug use policy explicitly prohibits wrongful use of prescription drugs – including using others’ medication or sharing medication – and requires Sailors to self-report all prescribed drugs within 10 days to their chain of command. Misusing prescription drugs can result in severe health and career consequences, including dishonorable discharge from the Navy.

Tips to Avoid Misusing Prescription Drugs

1. **Take Correctly**  ▶ Follow the doctor’s orders and prescription instructions as directed.
2. **Report Promptly**  ▶ Ensure that both Navy Medical and your command are aware of your current prescriptions. Report prescriptions received from non-military providers within 10 days.
3. **Dispose Properly**  ▶ Cross out personal information on your prescription labels. Place unused medicine in a small plastic bag with an undesirable substance (e.g., kitty litter or used coffee grounds) and throw the bag in the trash. You can also dispose of unused medications through secure drop boxes at participating military treatment facilities.
4. **Never Share**  ▶ Never share your prescriptions with a friend, shipmate, or family member.

Questions to Ask your Doctor

- How much (or how many) of this medication am I supposed to take at one time?
- How many times a day (or week) am I supposed to take that amount?
- How long is this prescription valid? (Note: this may be different than the printed expiration date).
- If I do not feel like I need the medication anymore, should I continue to take it for the prescribed amount of time?
- If I feel like I need to take more than the prescribed amount to treat my symptoms, can I take an extra dose?
- Is this prescription available for refill?

Where to Turn for Help

If you or someone you know may have a problem with prescription drug misuse or abuse, speak with your command Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor (DAPA) or call 1-866-U-ASK-NPC.

For additional resources to help you and your shipmates use your prescription drugs safely, including behavioral signs of misuse and abuse, visit Prescription For Discharge.