

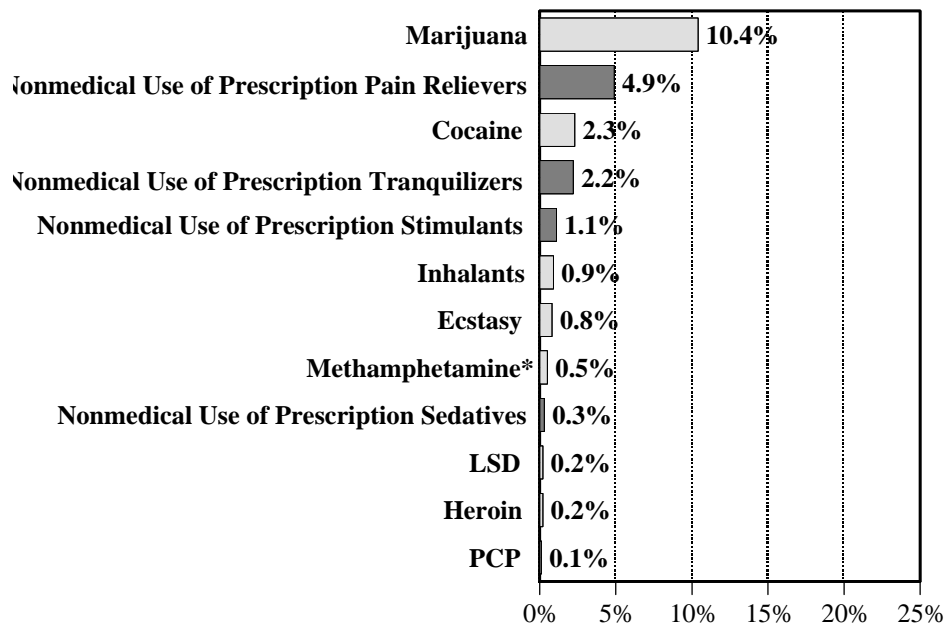
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Nonmedical Use of Prescription Drugs More Prevalent in U.S. than Use of Most Illicit Drugs

U.S. household residents are more likely to report nonmedical use of prescription drugs[†] than the use of almost all illicit drugs, according to recently released data from the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). One in twenty persons age 12 or older reported using prescription pain relievers nonmedically in the past year—more than any illicit drug with the exception of marijuana. Furthermore, the nonmedical use of prescription tranquilizers (2.2%) and stimulants (1.1%) was outranked by only marijuana and cocaine. All other illicit drugs, including ecstasy, heroin, and PCP, were used by less than 1% of U.S. household residents.

Percentage of U.S. Household Residents (Age 12 or Older) Reporting Past Year Drug Use, 2005



[†]Nonmedical use refers to using a prescription pain reliever, tranquilizer, stimulant, or sedative without a personal prescription or only for the experience or feeling it causes.

*Methamphetamine is also included in the drug category stimulants.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), *Results from the 2005 National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings, 2006*. Available online at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k5nsduh/2k5Results.pdf>.

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