

Prescription Drug Abuse On The Rise

(KAIR)--The abuse of prescription drugs has become an epidemic.

That word from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which says that while a decrease is noted in the use of some illegal drugs, such as cocaine, data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicates that nearly one-third of those aged 12 and over who used drugs for the first time in 2009 began by using a prescription drug for non-prescription purposes.

Kex-Rx pharmacist Joe Koechner says addiction to such narcotics has a physical explanation. He says there are chemical receptors in the human brain that start to feed on the drug. He says it's not unlike any other addiction where the body starts to crave the substance more and more.

Atchison County Attorney Jerry Kuckleman say that his office has recently seen many cases involving prescription medication. A number of those involve people using prescriptions intended for someone else. Kuckleman says the penalties for such cases vary, depending on the criminal history of the suspect. Someone with no criminal history is usually sent to a drug treatment program followed by eighteen months of probation.

Kuckleman says that simple possession of illegal prescription narcotics by a person with a criminal history can lead to a prison sentence of one to five years.

He sends the reminder that a prescription drug is only meant for the person it was prescribed for and can't legally be given to anyone else, even if no money changes hands.

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