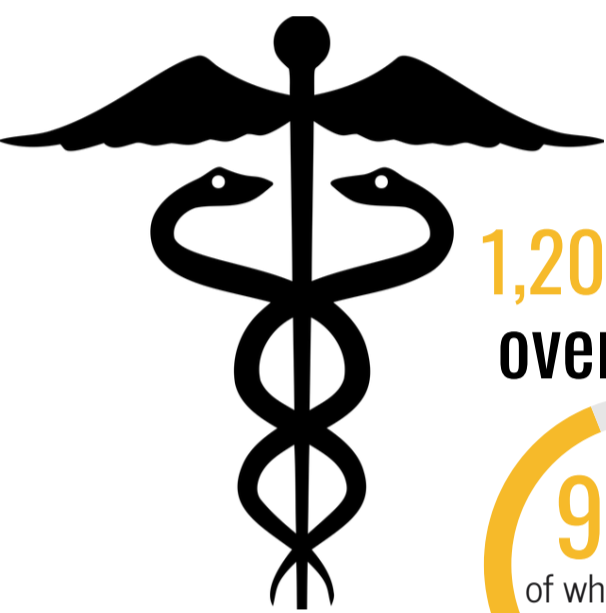# PREVENTING
PRESCRIPTION DRUG & OPIOID MISUSE

Misuse of prescription drugs means taking a medication in a manner or dose other than prescribed; taking someone else's prescription, even if for a legitimate medical complaint such as pain; or taking a medication to feel euphoria (i.e., to get high)
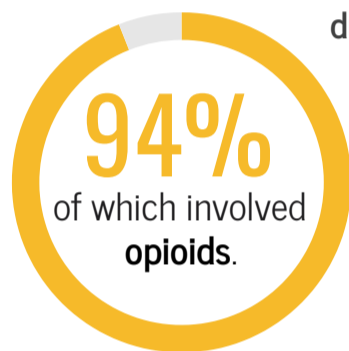
SCOPE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE

In Connecticut, there were
1,200 accidental overdose deaths during 2019

94% of which involved **opioids**.

(OCME)

In 2017, an estimated
18 Million
Americans had misused medications at least once in the past year
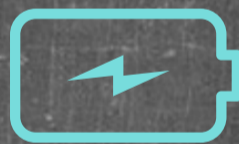
(2017 NSDUH)

3 TYPES OF MEDICATION THAT ARE MOST COMMONLY MISUSED

OPIOIDS
This type of prescription drug is usually prescribed to treat pain. Examples include Oxycontin, Vicodin and Percocet.

STIMULANTS
These are most often prescribed to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Examples include Ritalin, Adderall and Vyvanse.

DEPRESSANTS
Also known as central nervous system depressants. These are used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders. Examples include Ambien and Xanax.

DANGERS OF FENTANYL

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid analgesic that is similar to morphine but is **50 to 100 times more potent**. It can be prescribed for pain, but fentanyl is also made illegally and distributed as a street drug. Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids are the most common drugs involved in overdose deaths.

POTENTIAL RISKS FOR OLDER ADULTS

More than **80 percent** of older patients (ages 57 to 85 years) use at least one prescription medication on a daily basis, with more than **50 percent** taking more than five medications or supplements daily. This can potentially lead to health issues resulting from unintentionally using a prescription medication other than how it was prescribed, or from intentional nonmedical use.

SOURCES: https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/misuse-prescription-drugs/overview
https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/misuse-prescription-drugs/what-scope-prescription-drug-misuse
https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/fentanyl
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OCME/Statistics/Calendar-Years-2012-to-2019-final.pdf?la=en