

**A Message For UConn Health  
Medical & Dental Students**

# **Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act Notification**

**Fall 2023**

**UConn strives to promote an environment that supports the health and safety of all members of the community.**

To support the prevention and reduction of harm resulting from substance use, and in accordance with the Drug Free Schools and Campuses Act passed by Congress, the University provides an annual notice with information regarding alcohol and other substances. The following document provides a brief overview and links to information regarding UConn policy, impacts on health, potential legal sanctions, risk reduction strategies, and resources for support as they relate to alcohol and other substances.

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# Overview of Policy Statement

**Our community at UConn Health is maintained by each individual and organization adhering to a code of conduct which emphasizes compassion, respect to self and others, honesty, and integrity.**

The concern for these values and ethics are expressed in the Code of Professionalism Conduct for Medical Students and the School of Dental Medicine Code of Professionalism and Ethnical Conduct. As members of the University community, UConn Health students have an obligation to support the safety of their community by upholding this code.

An Impaired Student Policy has been established by UConn Health that defines protocol to follow for the student identified as having a Substance Use Disorder. This student will be referred for behavioral health assessment which may result in leave of absence until the problem/impairment is resolved.

Policy details can be found through the following link:

<https://medicine.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1392/2016/01/APPMannual.pdf>

# Alcohol

Alcohol is one of the most commonly used substances in the U.S. Students show that 15% of doctors and dentists struggle with alcohol abuse or dependence.

## ➤➤➤ Effects & Impacts on Health

- **In lower doses**, alcohol can cause euphoria, relaxation, and lowered inhibitions.
- **In higher doses**, and when consumed rapidly, alcohol can cause drowsiness, slurred speech, nausea, loss of coordination, impaired memory, sexual dysfunction, loss of consciousness, neurological deficits, increased risk of injuries, and fatal overdose.
- **Consumption of higher doses over time** is associated with increased risk of hypertension, heart disease, cancer, stroke, pancreatitis, liver inflammation (including cirrhosis), and alcohol use disorder.

## ➤➤➤ Alcohol Policy & The Law

In addition to impacting health, there can also be legal repercussions for alcohol-related violations. Violation of the law can result in criminal sanctions, which can adversely impact job opportunities, admission to graduate or professional schools, and eligibility for financial aid.

- **It is a crime for anyone under 21 to procure, possess, or transport alcohol.** Penalties include an infraction for the first offense, and up to \$500 for a second offense.
- **It is a crime to sell or supply alcohol to anyone under 21.** Penalties include a fine up to \$1000 and/or up to a year in prison.
- **It is a crime to misrepresent one's age, possess a fake ID, use someone else's ID, forge, or alter an ID, or let someone use your ID to obtain alcohol.** Penalties for using a fake ID to purchase alcohol include fines up to \$500, up to 30 days in prison, and/or a 150-day suspension of your motor vehicle license.
- **Consuming alcohol can impair one's ability to drive and can have legal consequences.** If you're over 21, it is illegal to drive with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.8 or over. If you're under 21, it's illegal to drive with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.2 or over.
- **For a more in-depth summary of relevant provisions of Connecticut liquor law, please click [here](#).**

## ➤➤➤ Reduce Your Risk!

- **Learn about and pour standard drinks, so each drink is REALLY only one drink.** Generally, 12 oz. of beer or hard seltzer that contains 4-5% alcohol (like a Bud Light or White Claw) = 5 oz. of wine = 1.5 oz. of 80 proof liquor. Keep in mind that many craft beers can contain higher percentages of alcohol (up to 18%!) which means a 12 oz. pour could contain well over 3 standard drinks!
- **Set limits you think will work for you.** Students who have 4 standard drinks or more (females) or 5 standard drinks or more (males) are at an increased risk for alcohol-related harm. Keeping your consumption below that number is a great place to start!
- **Recognize the signs of alcohol poisoning and call 911!** The signs that someone might be in trouble when it comes to alcohol aren't always clear. When in doubt, go with your gut. If you have a sense that something is wrong - you're probably right.



# Cannabis

With the recent legalization of cannabis in CT for residents over 21, and the opening of new recreational cannabis dispensaries near campus, we know that cannabis is growing in acceptability and popularity - and you might have questions.

## »»» Effects & Impacts on Health

- **At various doses**, cannabis can cause euphoria, relaxation, slowed reaction time, distorted sensory perception, impaired balance and coordination, increased heart rate and appetite, impaired memory, anxiety, and panic attacks.
- **Over time, consistent cannabis use** is associated with increased risk of frequent respiratory infections (when smoked), mental health concerns, and cannabis use disorder.

## »»» Cannabis Policy & The Law

In addition to impacting health, there can also be legal repercussions for cannabis-related violations. Violation of the law can result in criminal sanctions, which can adversely impact job opportunities, admission to graduate or professional schools, and eligibility for financial aid.

- **Cannabis is legal to possess and consume in CT for residents over 21 - but remains illegal under federal law.**
- Since the University receives federal funding, **UConn is required to prohibit the use and possession of federally classified controlled substances, including cannabis.** This means that the possession or use of cannabis (recreational or medical) is prohibited on all University property, and during any University activity.
- **For more information regarding the regulation of adult-use cannabis, please click [here](#).**

## »»» Reduce Your Risk!

- **Consider your timing, and avoid consuming cannabis before doing homework, taking exams, or going to class.** Cannabis can impact cognition, and it's important to have a clear mind before academic activities.
- **Choose lower potency cannabis**, that contains less "THC" (the active ingredient that causes a "high").
- **Avoid mixing cannabis with tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.** Multiple substances in the body makes it harder to predict effects and increases your risk of adverse impacts.



# Tobacco & Nicotine

While cigarette smoking has declined significantly in the last 15 years, it's still the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the U.S. The use of electronic nicotine delivery systems ("e-cigs" or "vapes") also contributes to preventable health issues, especially among young people.

## ➤➤➤ Effects & Impacts on Health

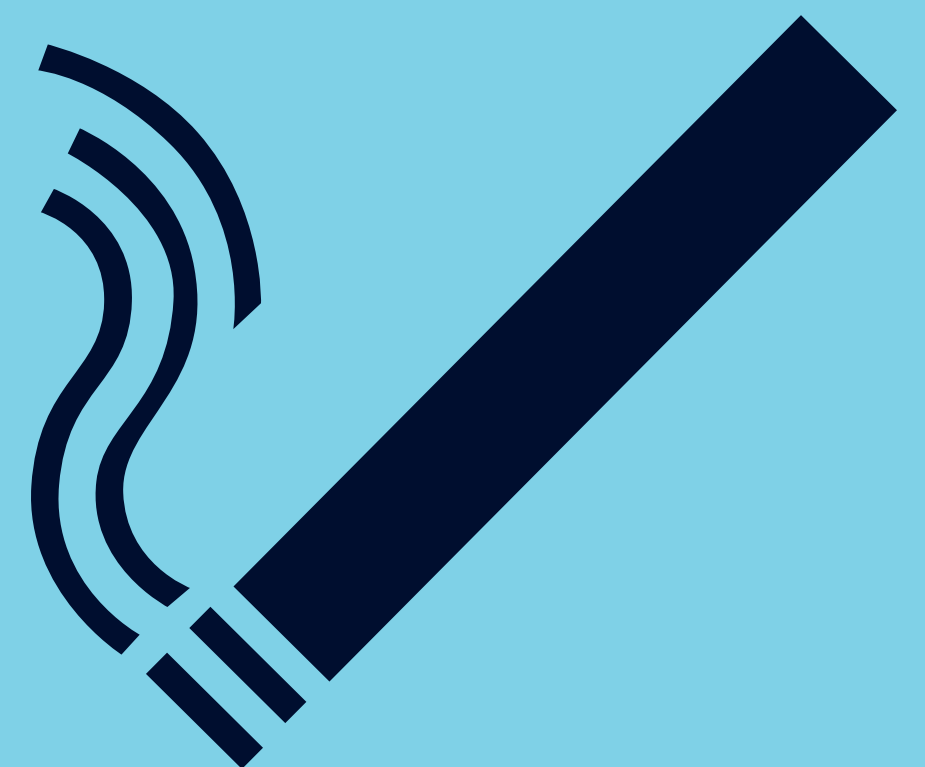
- **Using tobacco and nicotine over time** is associated with increased risk of diabetes, heart & lung disease, stroke, cancer (anywhere in the body, and especially in the lungs, throat, esophagus, etc.), and adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as preterm delivery, low birth weight, ectopic pregnancy, and stillbirth. These health impacts are also associated with the **inhalation of secondhand smoke**.
- **Nicotine itself is highly addictive**, and contains toxic substances that can harm adolescents, young adults, and developing fetuses.
- **Besides nicotine, the aerosol from e-cigs or vapes can also contain harmful substances**, including tiny particles that are inhaled deep into the lungs, cancer-causing chemicals, and heavy metals, like nickel, tin, and lead.

## ➤➤➤ Tobacco Policy & The Law

- **You must be 21 years of age or older to purchase and use tobacco products (including electronic nicotine delivery systems) in the state of Connecticut.**
- **For a more in-depth summary of relevant provisions of Connecticut smoking law, please click [here](#). For the UConn Smoking Policy, please click [here](#).**

## ➤➤➤ Reduce Your Risk!

- If you've never smoked or used other tobacco or nicotine products, including e-cigs & vapes, **don't start**.
- If you currently smoke or vape, **consider quitting!** Set up an appointment for tobacco cessation guidance with Student Health and Wellness or take advantage of online resources like [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov) for support.
- If you do smoke or vape, **be respectful of your fellow Huskies**. Secondhand smoke contains particulate matter that can cause asthma attacks and lung irritation, which is why smoking is not permitted inside or within 25 feet of University-owned buildings here at UConn.



# Prescription Medication

Misuse of prescription medication, or "non-medical use of prescription medication," involves using medication in a way or dose other than prescribed, taking someone else's medication, or taking medication specifically to get high. The most commonly misused types of medications include opioids (prescribed for pain), central nervous system depressants (typically sedatives and hypnotics prescribed for anxiety or sleep), and stimulants (typically prescribed to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD).

## »»» Effects & Impacts on Health

Health impacts of non-medical use of prescription medication vary, depending on which substance is used.

- **Use of opioids** can cause constipation, nausea, euphoria, slowed breathing rate, drowsiness, confusion, poor coordination, and increased sensitivity to pain.
- **Use of anti-anxiety medication & sedatives** can cause drowsiness, confusion, unsteady gait, slurred speech, poor concentration, dizziness, memory problems, and slowed breathing.
- **Use of stimulants** can cause increased alertness, irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, high body temperature, reduced appetite, insomnia, agitation, anxiety, and paranoia.

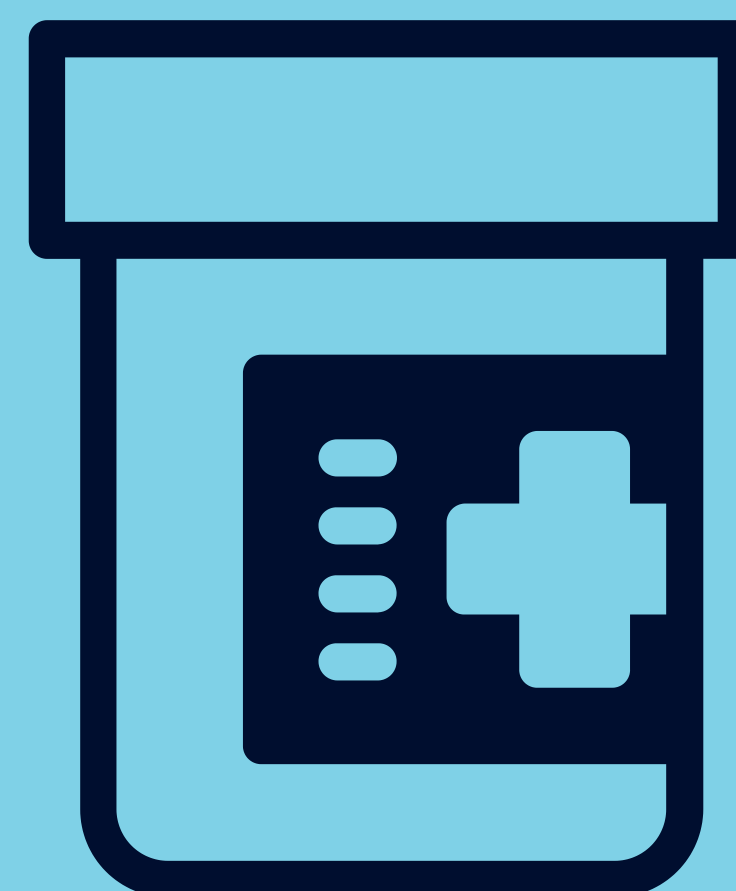
## »»» Prescription Medication Policy & The Law

In addition to impacting health, there can also be legal repercussions for prescription drug-related violations. Violation of the law can result in criminal sanctions, which can adversely impact job opportunities, admission to graduate or professional schools, and eligibility for financial aid.

- **It is a crime to sell prescription drugs, or to knowingly possess or deliver drugs that are not yours.** For a more in-depth summary of relevant provisions of Connecticut drug crime law, please click [here](#).

## »»» Reduce Your Risk!

- **Take any medication prescribed to you according to the guidance given by your medical care provider.** For questions or concerns, consult with your provider before making any changes.
- **Keep your prescription medication to yourself.** Don't share your prescriptions with others and consider keeping them in a secure, locked place.
- **Seek out alternative study aids,** such as getting a good night's sleep, light exercise, or mindfulness practices, rather than using prescription stimulants.
- **Avoid combining prescription medications,** especially Adderall and other stimulants, with other substances including caffeine, tobacco, cannabis, and alcohol.



# Other Substances

While alcohol, cannabis, tobacco/nicotine, and prescription medication have the most significant use on college campuses, there are other substances that have the potential to impact your health and the health of others and put you at risk of legal consequences.

- **Depressants**, (in addition to alcohol), including GHB, and rohypnol (roofies)
- **Stimulants**, (in addition to the prescription stimulants mentioned above), including cocaine and non-prescription methamphetamine
- **Hallucinogens**, including LSD (acid), MDMA (ecstasy, molly), and psilocybin (mushrooms)
- **Dissociatives**, including PCP, ketamine, and DXM (cough medicine)
- **Narcotics**, (in addition to the prescription opioids mentioned above), including heroin
- **Inhalants**, such as solvents, like gasoline and paint thinner, aerosols (spray cans), and gases (nitrous oxide and whippets)

## ➤➤➤ More Information

- **Acute effects and impacts on health vary depending on the substance. For a list of health impacts listed by substance, please click [here](#).**
- **In addition to impacting health, there can also be legal repercussions for controlled substance related violations. Violation of the law can result in criminal sanctions and adversely impact job opportunities, admission to graduate or professional schools, and eligibility for financial aid.**
- **It is a crime to knowingly possess, deliver, or sell controlled substances. For a more in-depth summary of relevant provisions of Connecticut drug crime law, please click [here](#).**



# Resources & Support

UConn Health is committed to offering resources to support students who are experiencing impacts from substance use and wish to make changes.

Students struggling with alcohol and or drug use are encouraged to seek support and counsel from their respective Student Affairs offices and our Student Behavioral Health Service, which provides referrals for substance use evaluations in the community. Staff in the Student Behavioral Health Service are experienced in working with substance use concerns and can provide direct assistance as well as information about off-campus assessments, treatment facilities, and area support groups.



UConn Health offers the following programs, services, and support for students related to the use of alcohol and other drugs:

- Free and anonymous online assessment tools for students to receive personalized feedback about [alcohol](#) or [cannabis](#) use in the convenience and comfort of their own space. **Available for students on all campuses.**
- [Recovery support services](#) for students in or seeking recovery from substance use disorders and/or other mental and behavioral health disorders. This includes one-on-one recovery coaching, peer all recovery meetings, friends and family recovery meetings, and a wide array of social and service opportunities. **Available for students on all campuses.**
- **Substance Abuse and Addiction Hotline**, available 24/7 for support around substance use and misuse for oneself or a loved one.
  - 1-844-289-0879
  - [drughelpline.org](http://drughelpline.org)



# Sources

- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
  - Fetal Alcohol Exposure, retrieved online from [www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/fetal-alcohol-exposure](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/fetal-alcohol-exposure)
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
  - Commonly Used Drugs Chart, retrieved online from [www.nida.nih.gov/research-topics/commonly-used-drugs-charts](http://www.nida.nih.gov/research-topics/commonly-used-drugs-charts)
  - Commonly Abused Drugs Chart, retrieved online from [www.nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/cadchart.pdf](http://www.nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/cadchart.pdf)