

DRUG CLASSIFICATIONS



Use this brief summary of drug categories to familiarize yourself with the actions and dangers of using these substances. Join with us in educating for prevention.

In a broad sense, a drug may be defined as any substance that, when taken into the body, alters the way the body functions.

Drugs may be classified in several ways.

Physicians are concerned with the medical use of a drug; scientists are interested in the chemical structure and properties of the substance; law enforcement is governed by the legal status of the drug. The 1970 federal Controlled Substance Act established a series of five categories or schedules that provide a specific set of guidelines for all drugs listed in each section. All Schedule I drugs are illegal. Schedule II, III, and IV drugs apply to prescriptions only. Schedule V drugs are over-the-counter products.

The classifications made by pharmacologists (scientists who study the effects that drugs have on humans and animals) will be followed in this discussion. Psychoactive drugs - drugs that affect mind and behavior - are divided into these types.