Oregon's Stimulant Crisis Has a Hidden Prescription Drug Problem

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Serenity Lane, an Oregon-based non-profit addiction treatment provider, has published a new resource detailing the physical risks and warning signs associated with snorting Adderall, a form of prescription stimulant misuse that has grown alongside Oregon's broader stimulant crisis. The resource explains why people misuse Adderall this way, what it does to the body, and when the behavior has crossed into addiction. It comes as Oregon recorded 831 stimulant-related hospitalizations and 471 emergency department visits in 2022 alone ? figures the resource cites as a clear indicator that misuse is on the rise statewide.

The resource makes it perfectly clear that snorting Adderall carries many risks far beyond what most people would expect when they first try it. As the blog states: "Crushing and inhaling pills bypasses the body's natural processing, forcing the stimulant directly into the bloodstream through the nasal tissues. This makes its effects hit faster and stronger, but also more unpredictably." That mechanism is precisely what makes this method of misuse so dangerous ? and why the resource frames it not as misuse but as abuse from the outset.

For Oregonians watching someone they care about navigate stimulant misuse, recognizing the pattern early

is often the difference between intervention and escalation. Treatment programs that have experience in stimulant addiction understand that the pathway from prescription use to misuse is not often dramatic ? it tends to be gradual and motivated more by constant pressure. Sometimes it?s even normalized before it becomes a true crisis. Knowing what to look for and knowing that effective care exists matters.

The resource also addresses how quickly overdose risk rises when Adderall is snorted rather than taken as prescribed. The stakes of that distinction are laid out plainly in the blog: "Overdose risk increases dramatically when Adderall is crushed and snorted. The body absorbs the stimulant in an unnatural surge, overwhelming the nervous system. Unlike swallowing a pill, there's no buffer to slow absorption, which means the 'safe' threshold can be crossed much faster." The window between a dose that feels manageable and one that overwhelms the body entirely narrows significantly with every use ? and the resource is clear that an overdose in this context is not a scare. It can be fatal.

Stimulant misuse is not new. The conversation around it is just finally starting to catch up. Adderall sits in a strange cultural middle ground; it is a legitimately prescribed medication. It is common to be found both on college campuses and in professional settings. That familiarity has a way of making this misuse feel less serious than it actually is. A pill a doctor prescribes can't be that dangerous, the thinking goes ? even when it's being crushed and snorted for a faster high. That assumption is exactly what makes this kind of misuse so easy to miss until the consequences make it impossible to ignore. Oregon recorded hundreds of stimulant-related hospitalizations in a single year, and those numbers have been climbing. Whether the state's healthcare community starts treating stimulant misuse as its own crisis, rather than a footnote to the opioid epidemic, may determine how many more of those hospitalizations were preventable.

About Serenity Lane: Serenity Lane has been helping people overcome substance and alcohol use disorders since 1973. All of the programs they offer have been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). They have introduced many new programs in Oregon, such as residential step-down and outpatient programs that integrate residential and outpatient services. They have also been the provider of the only Addiction Counselor Training Program in Oregon. Some of their graduates are now offering their services through various treatment programs nationwide.

Serenity Lane: Finding Serenity in Long-Term Recovery.

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Serenity Lane Intensive Outpatient Services, Eugene

Serenity Lane was established as a private, non-profit addiction treatment center for alcoholism and drug use in 1973. We have programs throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington. We believe that recovery from addiction is possible.

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