

Glossary

UNDERSTANDING DRUGS AND MEDICINE

A

active ingredient the chemical component that gives a medicine its action

addiction a condition in which a person can no longer control his or her drug use

D

drug any substance that causes a change in a person's physical or psychological state

drug interaction a condition in which a drug reacts with another drug, food, or dietary supplement such that the effect of one of the substances is greater or smaller

drug tolerance a condition in which a user needs more of a drug to get the same effect

G

generic medicine a medicine made by a company other than the company that developed the original medicine

M

medicine any drug used to cure, prevent, or treat illness or discomfort

O

over-the-counter (OTC) medicine any medicine that can be bought without a prescription

P

physical dependence a condition in which the body relies on a given drug in order to function

prescription (pree SKRIP shuhn) a written order from a doctor for a specific medicine

psychoactive describes a drug or medicine that affects the brain and changes how a person perceives, thinks, or feels

S

side effect any effect that is caused by a drug and that is different from the drug's intended effect

W

withdrawal uncomfortable physical and psychological symptoms produced when a physically dependent drug user stops using drugs