

Researchers call for clarity on the definition of medicine misuse

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Medicine misuse is a public health issue, but the term has different meanings to people in different settings. A recent analysis of published studies provides a comprehensive overview of the terms and definitions used to characterize medicine misuse. The findings are published in the *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*.

Among 51 relevant studies, there were 71 definitions and 74 examples of misuse. The authors of the analysis noted that a certain confusion has reigned between *misuse*, *abuse*, and *medication errors*, with a clear need for classifying and selecting terms and definitions to understand which situations truly involve medicine misuse.

"A novel, consensual and standardised [definition](#) of medicine misuse is required," the authors wrote. "Such a taxonomy could include the different key elements highlighted in the present review, namely *initiator*, *intent*, *purpose* and *context* of medicine misuse."

More information: *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* (2020).
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