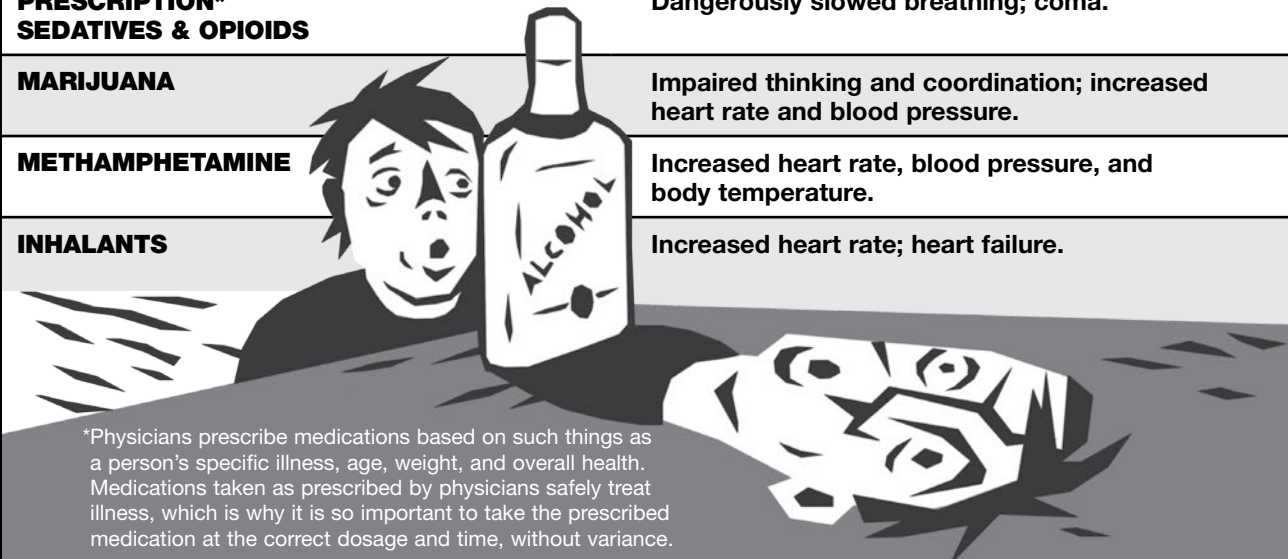


Alcohol + Drugs = Magnified Effects

Study the information from the diagram below, and then answer the “Think It Through” questions that follow. Write in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

Using alcohol with other drugs can magnify the effects of each drug and increase the harmful consequences. The results can be deadly. For example, alcohol combined with cocaine can increase blood pressure to dangerous levels. Combined with prescription sedatives and opioids, alcohol can drastically slow breathing.

Drug Name	MAGNIFIED Effects With Alcohol
COCAINE	Increased blood pressure and heart rate.
PRESCRIPTION* SEDATIVES & OPIOIDS	Dangerously slowed breathing; coma.
MARIJUANA	Impaired thinking and coordination; increased heart rate and blood pressure.
METHAMPHETAMINE	Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature.
INHALANTS	Increased heart rate; heart failure.



*Physicians prescribe medications based on such things as a person's specific illness, age, weight, and overall health. Medications taken as prescribed by physicians safely treat illness, which is why it is so important to take the prescribed medication at the correct dosage and time, without variance.

Think It Through

1. Prescription sedatives include sleeping pills and anti-anxiety medications such as Valium® and Xanax®. Prescription opioids include Vicodin®, Oxycontin®, and codeine. Why could combining any of these drugs with alcohol land a person in the emergency room (ER)?
2. Why is taking a prescription drug in a manner different from the way it was prescribed so dangerous?
3. Impaired thinking and coordination are dangerous side effects that result from mixing marijuana and alcohol. What are some harmful consequences that might result from this combination?
4. Heavy alcohol use does not have to be combined with other drugs to cause damage to your brain or body. Alcohol can damage the liver and heart while also impairing brain function. How does this make mixing drugs and alcohol so dangerous?