

Self-Medicating

MCC Medical Patient Education Module

Since an individual may use a substance inappropriately, there are dangers associated with self-medicating. The National Institutes of Health explains that individuals are not always responsible with the way they self-medicate and they do not have the training to identify the underlying cause of their symptoms. Depending on the situation, the risks associated with a medication can vary; however, there are some risks that are common to many individuals.

The risks that are associated with self-medication include:

- Inaccurate diagnosis
- Using inappropriate medications that cause side effects
- Masking the symptoms of a serious condition
- Delaying medical advice
- Inaccurate dosage that leads to accidental overdose
- Mixing medications that are not safe to mix, which may result in legal costs or health concerns
- Risk of abuse
- Risk of developing an addiction or several addictions

In the worst-case scenario, self-medicating can lead to severe health conditions or even death.