

# Keeping Prescription Pads Secure and Reducing Tampering



*With prescription drug abuse on the rise, addicts and drug dealers increasingly are falsifying prescriptions to get the drugs they want. Such events can cause costly and time-consuming problems for prescribers whose prescription pads are stolen or whose prescriptions are repeatedly modified.*



With more pharmacies reporting prescriptions to a state Prescription Monitoring Program, the likelihood that tampered prescriptions will be detected and come to the attention of medical/dental boards or law enforcement is rising. No prescriber can afford to be a repeated victim of prescription fraud.

This fact sheet suggests ways to keep prescription pads secure. It also suggests minimum notification responsibilities if a prescription pad is stolen, although requirements can vary between states.

## ■ **Acquiring/Printing Prescription Pads**

- Use electronically transmitted prescriptions for controlled substances when possible.
- Buy and primarily use prescription pads without the physician's Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) number on them.
- Invest in tamper-resistant prescription pads with the DEA number.
- Make sure the company printing the prescription pads maintains strict process controls over prescription pad production, storage, and delivery.
- If printing prescriptions in-house, lock up the computer prescription paper stock.

## ■ **Keeping Prescription Pads Secure**

- Avoid pre-signing blank prescription pads, especially pads with the DEA number.
- Establish and maintain an inventory of prescription pads.

- Limit access to prescription pads with the DEA number to authorized personnel.
- Lock prescription pads in a secure location.
- Document the control number on each new pad.
- Keep the prescription pad in a pocket.

## ■ **Guarding Against Tampering**

- Use a gel pen to write prescriptions.
- Fill up blank space on a written prescription.

## ■ **If a Prescription Pad Is Stolen**

- Immediately inform the local police department and local DEA office of the theft. Keep a copy of all communications for future reference.
- Give the control number of the first and last prescription in the pad to the state's pharmacy organization.
- Once a pharmacy alert is received that a fraudulent prescription has been filled, request a copy of each filled prescription. Keep these records and file a copy with the police department and DEA.

## ■ **Reference**

Jain, S. (2014). A diverted or stolen prescription has been signed in your name. What do you do now? *Current Psychiatry*, 13(7), 63.



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