

Perceived Susceptibility, Severity, and Intentions Regarding Stimulant Misuse: A Survey of the US General Public



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INTRODUCTION

- Rates of drug overdose deaths involving prescription stimulants (e.g., Adderall®, Concerta®) as well as non-prescription stimulants (e.g., methamphetamine, cocaine) are rising across the United States among multiple age groups.^{1,2,3}
- Despite the alarming rise in stimulant overdose rates, limited research has examined perceptions surrounding stimulant use and misuse at the national level, and prior studies have focused on the adolescent and young adult populations rather than the U.S. adult population.

OBJECTIVES

- The purpose of this study was to better understand perceived susceptibility to, severity of, and intentions regarding stimulant misuse among younger and older adults.

METHODS

- **Study Design:** Cross-sectional survey.
- **Participants:** Adults ≥18 years living in the United States.
- **Recruitment:** Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk).
- **Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey distributed via MTurk.
- **Survey Instrument:** Adapted from B.A. Kinman (2018) and the Health Belief Model.
- **Data Analysis:** Descriptive statistics. Differences in mean scale scores between younger adults (≤44) and middle-aged/older adults (>44) were assessed using Mann-Whitney U tests (alpha=0.05).

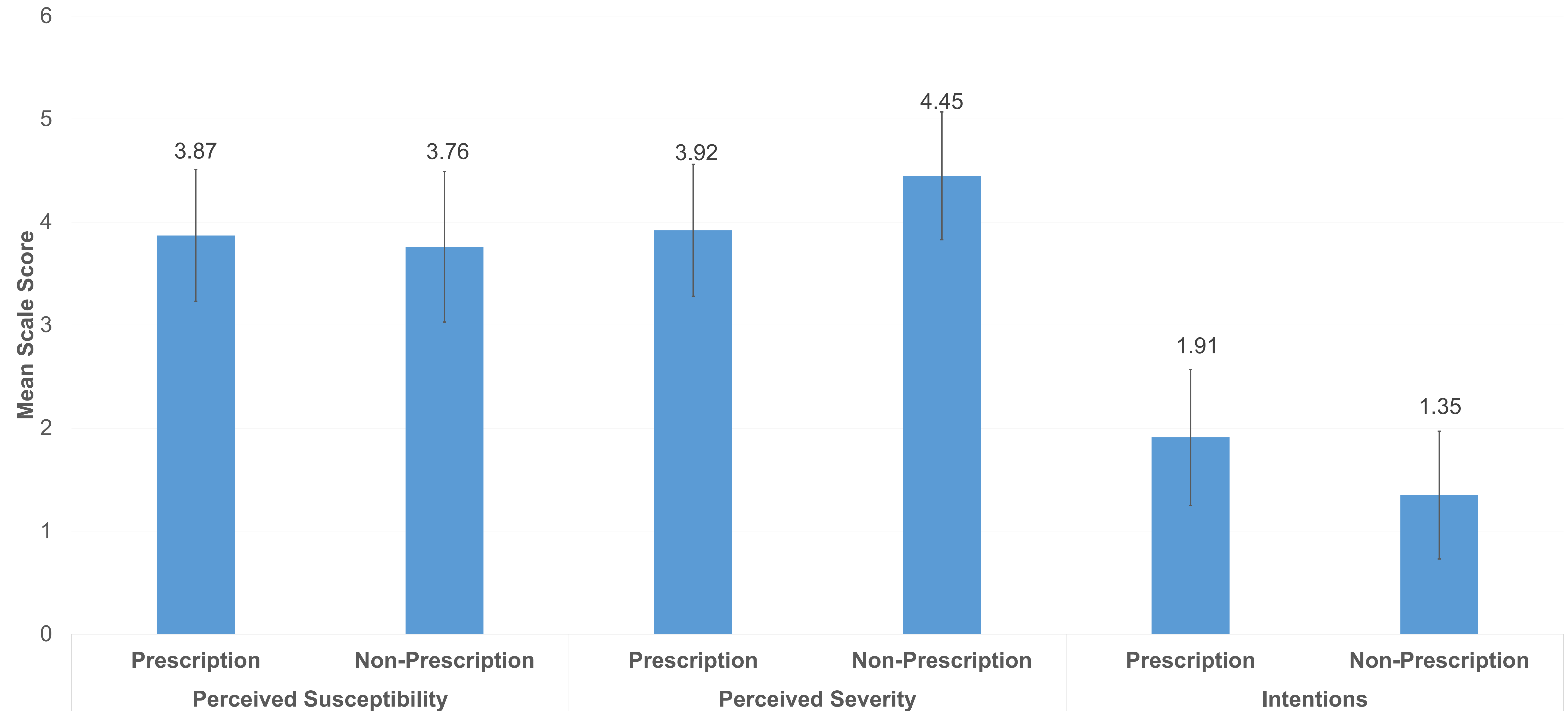
Outcomes	Measurement
Perceived Susceptibility to Stimulant Misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likert-type scales (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) • Prescription misuse (8-items) • Non-prescription misuse (5-items)
Perceived Severity of Stimulant Misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likert-type scales (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) • Prescription misuse (8-items) • Non-prescription misuse (4-items)
Intentions to Misuse Stimulants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likert-type scales (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) • Prescription misuse (5-items) and • Non-prescription misuse (4-items)

Compared to middle-aged/older adults, mean[SD] perceived severity of prescription stimulant misuse was lower among younger adults (3.84[0.66] versus 4.05[0.59]; p=0.006).



Younger adults had higher mean[SD] intentions to misuse prescription (1.72[0.72] vs 1.49[0.54]; p=0.008) and non-prescription (1.42[0.68] vs 1.24[0.49]; p=0.024) stimulants compared to middle-aged/older adults.

Figure 1. Overall Mean Perceived Susceptibility, Severity, and Intentions Regarding Stimulant Misuse (N=303)



CONCLUSIONS AND IMPACT

- Perceived severity of prescription stimulant misuse was lower among younger adults compared to middle-aged/older adults.
- Prescription and non-prescription intentions were higher among younger adults compared to middle-aged/older adults.
- Future studies should explore influential factors leading to and strategies to overcome these age-related disparities in perceptions and intentions.

DISCLOSURES

- This study was funded by Auburn University Harrison College of Pharmacy and completed as part of the AACP SAS Summer Research Exchange Program.

REFERENCES

- Use your smartphone to scan the QR code above for the full study abstract, results, and references.