

# Walk & Talk: Stimulant Use

The walk from the waiting room to the exam room is an opportunity for medical assistants to "walk and talk" with patients. Here is a script that shows how a medical assistant can provide education and support to patients about excessive stimulant use.

**Background:** Stimulants are the second most used and abused substances in the United States. While there are legal (caffeine, nicotine, prescription stimulants) and illegal stimulants (cocaine, methamphetamine, ecstasy), even legal stimulants can be misused and cause adverse health outcomes. This is especially true for individuals who are pregnant or trying to get pregnant. Helping patients understand the risks of stimulant use and misuse, as well as where to seek resources, can decrease harmful impacts and support healthier individuals and pregnancies.

**Medical Assistant:** \*calls patient from the waiting room\*

**Patient:** \*walks back to hallway\*

**Medical Assistant:** Hi, how have you been?

**Patient:** Not too bad.

**Medical Assistant:** Glad to hear it! We're sharing this card with all of our patients about how common stimulant use is and the impact it can have on health. There are different kinds of stimulants... legal stimulants, like caffeine, as well as illegal stimulants, like cocaine or methamphetamine. Stimulants can have a harmful impact on health and this card offers some information and resources in case you or someone you know may have an issue with stimulant use. If you have questions or are concerned about how stimulants are affecting your health, please talk with the doctor.  
\*hands postcard with graphic to patient\*

**Patient:** Okay, thanks. Good to know.

**Medical Assistant:** You're welcome!



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