Schedules of Controlled Substances

The controlled substances and their derivatives listed under the CSA can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 21 under "Part 1308—Schedules of Controlled Substances."

The drugs and drug products under the jurisdiction of the CSA are divided into five schedules. Controlled substances in Schedules II-V have an accepted medical use in the United States, and Schedule I substances do not. The characteristics and some examples of the drugs in each schedule are outlined below.

Schedule I Substances

The substances in this schedule have a high abuse potential and no accepted medical use in the United States. This is the only schedule that includes drugs that are not available for prescribing, dispensing or administering. DEA does allow for research involving Schedule I substances. This requires a separate registration as a researcher.

Examples of substances classified as Schedule I narcotics include heroin, certain clandestinely made fentanyl analogs, and propiram. Some hallucinogenic substances found in Schedule I include LSD, marijuana, and MDMA (Ecstasy).

Other examples of Schedule I substances are the depressants methaqualone and gamma hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) and the stimulant methcathinone.

Schedule II Substances

Substances in Schedule II have a high abuse potential with severe psychological or physical dependence liability, have an accepted medical use in the United States, and are available for practitioners to prescribe, dispense and administer.

Some examples of single entity Schedule II narcotics include morphine, codeine, hydrocodone, and opium. Other Schedule II narcotic substances and their common name brand products include: hydromorphone (Dilaudid®), methadone (Dolophine®), meperidine (Demerol®), oxycodone (Percodan®) and fentanyl (Sublimaze®).

Some examples of Schedule II stimulants include amphetamine (Dexedrine®), Adderall®, methamphetamine (Desoxyn®) and methylphenidate (Ritalin®).

Other Schedule II substances include cocaine, amobarbital, glutethimide, pentobarbital and secobarbital.
Schedule III Substances

The substances in this schedule have an abuse potential which is less than those in Schedule II, but more than Schedule IV substances.

Some examples of Schedule III narcotics include products containing less than 15 milligrams of hydrocodone per dosage unit (i.e., Vicodin®, Lorcet®, Tussionex®), and products containing not more than 90 milligrams of codeine per dosage unit (i.e., codeine with acetaminophen, aspirin or ibuprofen).

Other Schedule III substances include anabolic steroids benzphetamine (Didrex®), phendimetrazine, buprenorphine (Buprenex®) and any compound, mixture, preparation or suppository dosage form containing amobarbital, secobarbital, pentobarbital, dromabinol (Marinol®) or ketamine.

Schedule IV Substances

The substances in this schedule have an abuse potential less than those listed in Schedule III and more than substances in Schedule V.

Some examples of Schedule IV narcotics include propoxyphene (Darvon®), butorphanol (Stadol®), and pentazocine (Talwin-NX®).

The following benzodiazepine substances are also found in Schedule IV. They include alprazolam (Xanax®), clonazepam (Klonopin®), clorazepate (Tranxene®), diazepam (Valium®), flurazepam (Dalmene®), halazepam (Paxipam®), lorazepam (Ativan®), midazolam (Versed®), orazepam (Serax®), prazepam (Verstran®), temazepam (Restoril®), triazolam (Halcion®), and quazepam (Doral®).

Other Schedule IV substances include barbital, phenobarbital, chloral hydrate, ethchlorvynol (Placidyl®), chlordiazepoxide (Librium®), ethinamate, meprobamate, paraldehyde, methohexital, phentermine, diethylpropion, pemoline (Cylert®), mazindol (Sanorex®), and sibutramine (Meridia®).

Schedule V Substances

The substances in this schedule have an abuse potential less than those listed in Schedule IV and consist primarily of preparations containing limited quantities of certain narcotic and stimulant drugs generally for antitussive, antidiarrheal and analgesic purposes. Some examples are cough preparations containing not more than 200 milligrams of codeine per 100 milliliters or per 100 grams (Robitussin AC®, Phenergan with codeine®).

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