Let $R$ be a commutative ring with $1 \neq 0$ and $n$ a positive integer. In this paper, we study two generalizations of a prime ideal. A proper ideal $I$ of $R$ is called an $n$-absorbing (resp., strongly $n$-absorbing) ideal if whenever $x_1 \cdots x_{n+1} \in I$ for $x_1, \ldots, x_{n+1} \in R$ (resp, $I_1 \cdots I_{n+1} \subseteq I$ for ideals $I_1, \ldots, I_{n+1}$ of $R$), then there are $n$ of the $x_i$’s (resp., $n$ of the $I_i$’s) whose product is in $I$. We investigate $n$-absorbing and strongly $n$-absorbing ideals, and we conjecture that these two concepts are equivalent. In particular, we study the stability of $n$-absorbing ideals with respect to various ring-theoretic constructions and study $n$-absorbing ideals in several classes of commutative rings. For example, in a Noetherian ring every proper ideal is an $n$-absorbing ideal for some positive integer $n$, and in a Prüfer domain, an ideal is an $n$-absorbing ideal for some positive integer $n$ if and only if it is a product of prime ideals. (Received September 04, 2008)