Over-the-Counter Cough Medicine Abuse

Working together to protect teens

STOPMEDICINEABUSE.ORG
Rx and OTC Medicine Abuse

The Office of National Drug Control Policy reports that medicine abuse is our nation’s fastest-growing drug problem.
Teens Turn to Medicine Cabinets to Get High

- According to the 2014 Monitoring the Future Report, around 3 percent of teens have abused OTC cough medicines containing dextromethorphan (DXM) to get high.
- Teens mistakenly think this is a “safer” high.
- Unfortunately, many parents are not aware of this behavior.
- Detecting it is a challenge for parents and educators. Awareness is the key to prevention.
What Is Dextromethorphan?

A safe and effective cough suppressant ingredient found in 100+ OTC cough/cold medicines

The most widely used cough suppressant in the U.S.

Abused by teens taking 25 times or more than the recommended dose to get “high”
How To Know If a Medicine Contains DXM

- Identify products that contain DXM by reading the *ingredients list* or by looking for this *icon* on the package.

**PARENTS:**
Learn about teen medicine abuse

www.StopMedicineAbuse.org
What Are the Side Effects of Abuse?

- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Slurred speech
- Impaired physical coordination
- Rapid heart beat
- Drowsiness
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Disorientation

STOPMEDICINEABUSE.ORG
How Can You Prevent Abuse?

**Step 1: Educate Yourself**

- **Know the Warning Signs**
  - Empty cough medicine boxes or bottles in the trash a teen’s room, backpack or school locker
  - Teens purchasing or using cough medicine when not ill
  - Missing boxes or bottles from home medicine supply
  - Hearing a teen use certain slang terms for DXM abuse, such as skittles, skittling, tussin, robo-tripping, robo, CCC, triple Cs, and Dexing/DXM
How Can You Prevent Abuse?

**Step 2:** Monitor Your Medicines

**Step 3:** Talk to Your Teens

**Step 4:** Talk to Other Parents

STOPMEDICINEABUSE.ORG
How Can You Prevent Abuse?

**Step 5: Learn More**

- Go to StopMedicineAbuse.org to:
  - Order free brochures to read with your teen and share with other parents.
  - Connect with other parents through social media.
  - Learn about StopMedicineAbuse.org’s *Five Moms* campaign.
  - Sign up for the monthly e-newsletter.