

# YOUR TEEN'S LATEST HIGH MIGHT HIT CLOSER TO HOME THAN YOU THINK.

## COUGH AND COLD MEDICINES FROM THE MEDICINE CABINET —A CONVENIENT NEW HIGH FOR YOUR TEEN.

Many parents have no idea that teens are abusing these products. *But 1 in 25 eighth graders abused over-the-counter (OTC) cough and cold remedies in the past year.*<sup>1</sup> And cough and cold season means many teens have easier access to these products.

Like prescription drugs, OTC cough and cold remedies are often found at home. In many areas, teens can buy them at supermarkets, pharmacies, and convenience stores.

But that doesn't make them safe to use without proper supervision. Teens underestimate the dangers of abusing OTC drugs. Many contain Dextromethorphan (DXM), a cough suppressant, which can cause delusions, loss of consciousness, and even death when taken in excessive amounts. And taking these drugs with alcohol can make the effects even more dangerous.

Parents can help stop abuse of these products with three steps:

1. **Safeguard** your prescription and OTC drugs, especially those containing DXM. Monitor quantities and control access. Ask friends and family to do the same.
2. **Properly conceal and dispose** of old or unused medicines in the trash.
3. **Set clear rules** for teens about all drug and alcohol use, including never taking medicine without permission and always following proper dosages. And be a good role model when it comes to taking your own medicines.

Watch for warning signs your teen is using, such as empty bottles or packages and behavior changes, such as mood swings, or changes in appetite or sleep habits.

### SLANG TERMS TEENS ARE USING TO DESCRIBE COUGH AND COLD REMEDIES:

"DXM"

"TUSSIN"

"TRIPLE C"

"ROBO"

"DEX"

"RED DEVILS"

"SYRUP"

"SKITTLES"

You can keep your teen safe and drug-free. To learn more about OTC drug abuse and what you can do to stop it, visit [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com) or call 1-800-788-2800.

<sup>1</sup>2007 Monitoring the Future Study, University of Michigan, National Institute on Drug Abuse

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