

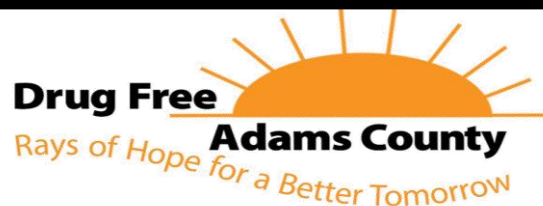
Drug Free Adams County

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Beware of OTC Cough Medicine Abuse

While millions of Americans rely on over-the-counter (OTC) medicines containing the cough suppressant ingredient dextromethorphan (DXM), availability of the medication is a way for teens to get high. Since OTC cough medicines are more readily available and more affordable than prescription or illicit drugs, teens may believe they are less dangerous. With studies showing that roughly 1 in 4 teenagers knows someone who has abused OTC cough medicine to get high, parents need to understand the risks these medications can pose.

DXM Side Effects

When abused, DXM can cause side effects that could lead to accidents and bodily harm, including: nausea and vomiting; impaired physical coordination; rapid heartbeat; high blood pressure; drowsiness; numbness of extremities; and hallucinations. DXM intoxication can last anywhere from 30 minutes to 6 hours after taking it.

Warning Signs of OTC Cough Medicine Abuse

- Empty cough medicine boxes/bottles in unexpected places
- Purchasing/using large amounts of it when not ill
- Visiting websites that explain how to abuse DXM
- Teens using slang terms like *skittling*, *robo-tripping* or *dexing*
- Unusual chemical/medicinal smells



How to Help Prevent Medicine Abuse

- **TALK** to your teen about OTC cough medicine abuse. Teens who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are 50% less likely to use drugs.
- **MONITOR** your medicine cabinets and your teen's activities.
- **SHARE** what you have learned with other parents.

For more information, please visit our website:
www.DrugFreeAdamsCounty.org