



What You Should Know About Teen Medicine Abuse

(NAPSA)—While millions of Americans safely rely on over-the-counter (OTC) cough medicine to temporarily relieve their cough symptoms, approximately one out of 20 teens reports abusing it to get high.

Teen medicine abuse—of prescription and OTC medicines—is a real problem among today’s youth. Teens access these medicines from home medicine cabinets and mistakenly believe that abusing them is “safer” than other drugs. Fortunately, there are several steps that parents can take to keep their own child out of such statistics.

Learn About Medicine Abuse

OTC cough medicine abuse may surprise you. When teens are abusing cough medicine, they are seeking a “high” from the active ingredient dextromethorphan (DXM). DXM is a cough suppressant that is found in over 100 products on the market today. When taken according to dosing instructions, medicines that contain DXM are safe and effective. Millions of Americans safely rely on OTC cough medicine, but abusers intentionally take excessive amounts—sometimes more than 25 times the recommended dose—to get high. This means they ingest multiple packages or bottles of OTC cough medicines that contain DXM!

Side effects of DXM include vomiting, rapid heartbeat, dizziness and disorientation. When combined with other drugs or alcohol, these side effects are greatly increased and can be lethal.



Parents, be sure to safeguard the medicines in your home so you’ll notice if anything is missing.

Talk to Your Teen

Talk to your teen about prescription and OTC medicine abuse. According to the Partnership at DrugFree.org, teens who learn from their parents about the risks of drugs are 50 percent less likely to use drugs.

Monitor Your Medicines

Safeguard the medicine cabinet in your home. Know what you have and how much, so you’ll notice if anything is missing. The Partnership at DrugFree.org also tells us that 64 percent of parents report that medicines in their home can be accessed by anyone. So be sure to store your prescription and OTC medicines in a secure place.

Learn More

Educate yourself! Get more information and see recommended conversation starters at www.StopMedicineAbuse.org.