Misuse and Abuse of Over the Counter Drugs

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Consumer Misperceptions and Misuse of OTC Pain Relievers
American Academy of Family Physicians

OTC pain relievers can lead to medical problems, such as gastrointestinal bleeding, ulcers, and liver damage.

Factors that may be contributing misuse:
• A perception among the public that OTC medicines are not “real” medicine
• Limited understanding of the ingredients
• A belief that “more is better”
• Unrealistic expectations about the normal range and duration of symptoms.
• Ability of any medication to fully relieve symptoms

http://www.nclnet.org/takewithcare/media/misperceptions.htm
Advil
• Generic - Ibuprofen
• Brand names - Motrin, Nuprin, Genpril

Tylenol
• Generic - Acetaminophen
• Brand names - Paracetamol, Datril, Panadol

Aleve
• Generic - Nonprescription strength Naproxen.
Pseudo ephedrine (Oral Route)
Some side effects may occur that usually do not need medical attention.

More common
- Nervousness
- Restlessness
- Trouble in sleeping

Less common
- Difficult or painful urination
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Fast or pounding heartbeat
- Headache
- Increased sweating
- Nausea or vomiting
- Trembling
- Unusual paleness
- Weakness

http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/drug-information/DR601759
SUDAFED PE®
Relief of sinus congestion and pressure from colds or allergies—right in your cold and allergy aisle.

SUDAFED®
Relief of sinus congestion and pressure from colds or allergies. Found behind the counter.

SUDAFED ON®
A new line of fast-acting sprays from the SUDAFED® family.
Acetaminophen Overdose: Side effects are rare

- Overdoses of acetaminophen - more than 56,000 ER visits / yr.
- Estimated 458 deaths from acute liver failure
- Acetaminophen-related liver failure appears to be on the rise
- N-acetylcysteine administered with 12 hours can prevent liver injury
- Unintentional overdosing usually only recognized after symptoms have developed.
- Delay in seeking medical attention, and/or to institute N-acetylcysteine therapy are associated with greater morbidity and mortality

http://www.health.harvard.edu/press_releases/acetaminophen_overdose.htm
Acetaminophen: Most common cause of acute liver failure in US

- the incidence of acetaminophen ALF has risen in the US over the years

- alarming, particularly since half the cases were accidental (unintentional)

- acetaminophen-related ALF from 28% in 1998 to 51% in 2003.
Ibuprofen / NSAIDS side effects may include:

- upset stomach, mild heartburn, diarrhea, constipation
- bloating, gas
- dizziness, headache, nervousness
- skin itching or rash
- blurred vision
- ringing in your ears

http://www.drugs.com/ibuprofen.html
Aspirin Poisoning

Early symptoms:
• tinnitus and impaired hearing
• GI distress
• Bruising

Later signs:
• rapid breathing
• vomiting
• bleeding
• double vision
• drowsiness
• confusion

http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/aspirin-poisoning
Reye's syndrome

Aspirin has been linked with Reye's syndrome, a rare but serious condition that can affect children and teenagers recovering from a viral infection.

Don't give aspirin to anyone age 18 or younger, unless specifically recommended by the child's doctor.

http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/reyes-syndrome/DS00142
Nearly one in five teens (19 percent or 4.5 million) report abusing prescription medications to get high; and one in 10 (10 percent or 2.4 million) report abusing cough medicine to get high.

More than half of teens (55 percent or 13 million) don’t agree strongly that using cough medicines to get high is risky.

http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/DrugIssue/Research/Teens_2005/Generation_Rx_Study_Confirms_Abuse_of_Prescription
Street Names for DXM:
- Candy
- C-C-C
- Dex
- DM
- Drex
- Red Devils
- Robo
- Rojo
- Skittles
- Tussin
- Velvet
- Vitamin D.

Street Names for DXM Abuse:
- Dexing
- Robotripping
- Robodosing
A Short List of OTC Medicines with DXM
Alka-seltzer Plus Cold & Cough Medicine
Contac
Coricidin HBP Cough and Cold
Dayquil LiquiCaps
Delsym
Dimetapp DM
Drixoral
Pertussin
Robitussin
Sudafed
Triaminic
Tylenol Cold
Vicks 44 Cough Relief
Vicks Nyquil LiquiCaps
Figure 2. Percentages of Use of Specific Over-the-Counter (OTC) Cough or Cold Medications in the Past Year among Past Year OTC Cough and Cold Medication Misusers Aged 12 to 25: 2006**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Caffeine (mg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk chocolate</td>
<td>8 oz</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark semi-sweet chocolate</td>
<td>1 oz</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewed green tea</td>
<td>8 oz</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anacin</td>
<td>one tablet</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepsi cola</td>
<td>12 oz can</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espresso</td>
<td>1 oz shot</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiorinal/Fioricet</td>
<td>one tablet</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca-cola</td>
<td>12 oz can</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewed black tea</td>
<td>8 oz</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Dew</td>
<td>12 oz can</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midol</td>
<td>1 gelcap</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excedrin pain reliever</td>
<td>1 tablet</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dexatrim Natural</td>
<td>one tablet</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jolt cola</td>
<td>12 oz can</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Bull energy drink</td>
<td>8.3 oz can</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster energy drink</td>
<td>16 oz can</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jolt caffeine energy gum</td>
<td>2 pieces</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penguin caffeinated mints</td>
<td>6 pieces</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafergot</td>
<td>one tablet</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Doz</td>
<td>one tablet</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewed coffee</td>
<td>12 oz cup</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivarin</td>
<td>one tablet</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripped Fuel Extreme Ephedra Free</td>
<td>2 capsules</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you suffer pain or distress because of your monthly period or your change of life?
Discover Lydia Pinkham Herbal Compound Liquid or Tablets for nutritional support for women during all stages of life from menstruation through menopause.
**Motherwort (leonurus cardiaca)**
Motherworts name comes from the fact that it has traditionally been viewed as specially useful in female disorders. It acts as a natural tranquilizer; it fights depression; and aids in promoting easier menstruation. It has a cheering, stimulant effect.

**Gentian (gentiana lutea)**
Revitalizes and invigorates.

**Jamaican dogwood (piscidia erthrina)**
has been recommended by generations of herbalists to reduce painful menstruation

**Pleurisy root (asclepias tuberosa)**
From early days, pleurisy root has been regarded as a valuable medicinal plant. It was an American Indian remedy. It exerts a general mild tonic effect on the system, and acts as a gentle laxative
Licorice (glycyrrhiza)
is not just flavoring. It has been widely used as a herbal medicine since the Ancient Greeks and Romans. It has soothing and rejuvenating effects.

Black cohosh (cimicifuga racemosa)
has a tonic, restorative effect; promotes easier menstruation; and, as a diuretic, reduces bloating.

Dandelion (taraxicum officinale)
has been known as a medicinal herb since the Arabs of the 10th century. It is a mild tonic and diuretic.

Lydia Pinkham is available in our health care store in both liquid form (the herbal compound) and as tablets.
Photo credit: Jacob Wackerhousen
The DASIS Report: Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Abuse Admissions

In 1999, 87 percent of substance abuse treatment admissions for prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drug abuse were among Whites.

Substance abuse treatment admissions for abuse of tranquilizers and sedatives were more likely to be female.

Admissions for abuse of prescription stimulants and OTC drugs were more likely to be male.

http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k2/OTCtx/OTCtx.cfm

From 1999 to 2004, there was a seven-fold increase in cases related to the abuse of DXM reported to poison control centers nationwide. Most of these cases were among 15- and 16-year-olds. (Bryner, 2006)

EROWID
Documenting the Complex Relationship Between Humans & Psychoactives

Plants & Drugs
Mind & Spirit
Freedom & Law
Arts & Culture
OTC Drugs and Household Items

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Harsh drug laws don’t make people stop trying to alter their brain chemistry, they just turn to over-the-counter drugs and other household items.

- **A Search for Legal Inebriants**  
  A list of OTC substances that can be used to achieve a state of intoxication. There is a moderately detailed description of each item in the list. Near the end of the document there is a compilation of "tid-bit" facts about various other drugs, these facts mostly have to do with health and safety regarding use.

- **Adderall: A Thrill Like No Other**  
  Adderall is a drug prescribed for ADD and ADHD, while it has beneficial effects on those with these disorders the effects rendered on a normal person can be rather great. I experienced this and this roughly details my 'journey' with Adderall.

- **Adventures with Nutmeg**  
  This section will detail my own experiences while using nutmeg as a hallucinogen. Nutmeg, yes nutmeg, the household spice used for flavouring and aromasizing is also a powerful, depending on dose, drug.
Siberian Amanita Muscara Powder. Botanic Specimen. For educational and research purposes only....

But it must be understood that within this mushroom is heaven and hell. While with one experiment you can find bliss, within the next you may find terror....

http://www.everyon edoesit.co.uk/online_headshop/Siberian_Amanita_Muscara_Powder.cfm?iProductID=2298&iProductCategoryID=553
Stages of Addiction

• **Use**-- In this stage, people use substances and enjoy behaviors responsibly with no painful consequences.

• **Misuse**-- In this stage, people begin to experience negative effects of their choices in their relationships, work and health.

• **Abuse** - When people continue using a substance or practicing a behavior in spite of negative consequences, they are in the abuse stage.

• **Dependency** - In this stage, the substance or behavior is the focal point of the person's life.

• **Addiction** - A person becomes addicted alcohol and drugs when stopping their use causes withdrawal symptoms.

http://www.journeyofrecovery.org/stages-addiction.htm