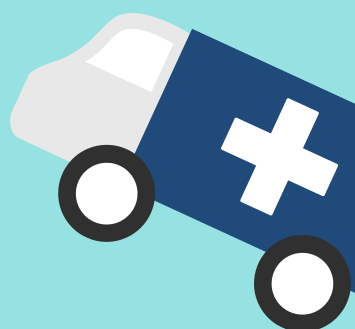
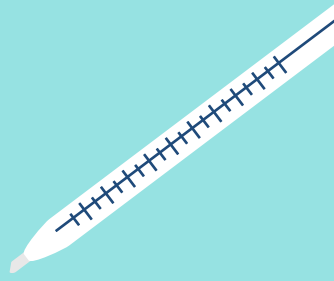


# OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUG FACTS



Not all OTC Drugs are created equal. Here's what you need to know about some of the most popular cold & allergy medicines.

compiled by [Sprout Health Group](#)

## 1 PSEUDOEPHEDRINE

A common decongestant, pseudoephedrine is found in many allergy medications, such as Claratin-D and Allegra-D. Because it can be used to manufacture meth, you'll often find it behind-the-counter. However, you cannot get high from it. When used as directed, it is not habit-forming.

## 2 CODEINE

Codeine is an opioid used in cough medications. Because it can become habit-forming and is subject to abuse, not all states allow you to buy drugs with codeine over-the-counter. On the street, codeine is known as "cough syrup," schoolboy, coties, and t-three.

## 3 DEXTROMETHORPHAN (DXM)

An opioid derivative, DXM can behave like ketamine or PCP, which has driven recreational use of the drug. Some people use it improperly by snorting or injecting it to achieve a faster high. In these cases, it can become addictive.

## 4 IBUPROFEN

Ibuprofen is a low-risk nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). Doctors generally consider the drug safe for colds, inflammation and pain management. However, some groups should be careful. Doctors do not recommend ibuprofen for pregnant women or people with heart issues.,

## 5 ACETAMINOPHEN

Acetaminophen, better known as Tylenol, is generally safe when used as directed. Although there is little risk of abuse, overdose can lead to toxicity. Untreated overdose can lead to liver and kidney failure.

## 6 GUAIFENESIN

Guaifenesin, the active ingredient in Mucinex, is generally safe when taken as directed and not considered addictive. However, some Mucinex varieties, like Mucinex DM, also contain DXM, so it's important to read the label.

## 7 LORATADINE

Like other antihistamines, loratadine treats allergy symptoms such as runny nose, itchy eyes and sneezing. Loratadine has a low risk of abuse, which may make it a good option for those with a history of addiction.

## 8 THE DANGERS OF MIXING DRUGS

No matter how safe an over-the-counter drug may be, it is never safe to mix OTC medications with recreational drugs or alcohol. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism warns that mixing alcohol with OTC drugs can lead to nausea, vomiting, drowsiness or even fainting.