

DEXTROMETHORPHAN (DXM) ABUSE

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This immediate warning is for all parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, schools, service providers, employers, all businesses that sell cold medicine, and anyone that cares or deals with youth or young adults.

Dextromethorphan (DXM) is and has been abused by our Meigs County youth and young adults (along with other Southeast Ohio counties) to alarming level. DXM is a very common cough suppressant that is available over-the-counter. Because it is a legal drug, it can be purchased by anyone, even a preteen (except in California).

You may have seen or taken DXM products under the recognized name brands Coridin, Robitussin DM, Sudafed, Dayquil LiquiCaps, Vicks Formula 44 and NyQuil, and Dimetapp DM. They come in capsule and liquid form and are readily available in our community and relatively inexpensive.

Normal recommended doses of DXM are typically 15 to 30 milligrams. We have self-reports of our youth consuming up to entire bottles or packages of DXM in a single day up to 1500 milligrams. The abuse and overconsumption of DXM produces effects of inebriation (drunkenness) and an altered state of consciousness similar to illegal narcotics.

The DXM abuse comes with a very serious cost. There are extremely dangerous side effects for DXM abuse that include confusion, nausea, vomiting, high blood pressure, dizziness, fast heartbeat, stomach pain, numbness in hands, seizures, comas, and death.

Normal drug tests will not detect DXM. For that reason and the easiness to obtain DXM, abuse is on the rise in our community.

A person abusing DXM may leave behind empty blister packs or empty bottles of cough medication. Some of the indicators of DXM abuse are changes in appearance/habits, secretive behavior, inability to focus, and frequent visits to stores and their aisles that stock DXM products. DXM abusers are typically shoplifting the products.

What can you do? All DXM products in your house should be carefully secured and monitored as you would all prescriptions. If you sell DXM products you are asked to place it in a monitored area or behind a counter. Support Ohio legislation that has been proposed to treat DXM similar to other cold medicines that are used manufacture Methamphetamines.

There is a great deal of information available on the internet of the dangers of DXM abuse. The Meigs County Juvenile Court is available to provide additional information, including treatment and educational opportunities, by being contacted at (740) 992-6205.