

- Dextromethorphan (DXM) is a synthetic drug found in a variety of over-the-counter cold & cough suppressant medications. Generally safe when taken in recommended doses, it has dangerous side effects when consumed in large amounts (SAMHSA, Office of Applied Studies).
- DXM is a stimulant drug and related to codeine, although it is not an opiate.
- DXM abuse is popular among adolescents but it is also abused by adults.
- There are approximately 140 products on the market that contain DXM and about 3.1 million persons aged 12 to 25 have used DXM products to get high (SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2006).
- An estimated 12,584 emergency room visits (0.7% of all drug-related ER visits) involve pharmaceuticals containing DXM (SAMHSA's Drug Abuse Warning Network-DAWN, 2004).
- DXM is inexpensive, easily accessible and abuse of this drug is easily hidden.
- Teens learn about DXM abuse primarily from the internet and friends already abusing it.
- Common forms of DXM are: tablets, capsules, gel caps, lozenges, powder and syrups.
- Most abusers ingest DXM orally, though some snort the pure powdered form.
- **Common slang terms:**
 - Candy
 - Robo
 - Velvet
 - Triple-C
 - Rojo
 - Drex
 - Dex
 - Skittles
 - DM
 - Red Devils
 - Tussin
 - Vitamin D
- **DXM users are sometimes called "syrup heads".**
- **The act of abusing DXM is often called "dexing", "robo-ing", "robotripping", or "robodosing".**
- **"Robo-shake" refers to the act of inducing vomiting after ingesting products containing DXM. "Robo-shakers" hope to have enough DXM absorbed to get high while expelling the ingredients that may cause adverse health effects.**
- Average therapeutic dose of a product containing DXM is 10 – 20 mg. every 4 hours or 30 mg. every 6 – 8 hours. To achieve a high, abusers ingest 250 – 1500 mg. at one time.
- **Effects of DXM Use (At-A-Glance):**
 - Hallucinations
 - Euphoria
 - Out-of-Body Experiences
 - Loss of Coordination
 - Enhanced Awareness
- **Adverse Side-Effects:**
 - Confusion
 - Headaches
 - Seizures
 - Dizziness
 - Psychosis
 - Panic Attacks
 - Slurred Speech
 - Abdominal Pain
 - Brain Damage
 - Dry, Itchy Skin
 - Paranoia
 - Vomiting
 - Nausea
 - Lethargy
 - Extremity Numbness
 - Loss of Consciousness
 - High Blood Pressure
 - Excessive Sweating
 - Impaired Judgment
 - Irregular Heartbeat
 - Blurred Vision
 - Facial Redness
 - Addiction
 - Death

➤ **DXM Abusers Experience 4 “High” Phases:**

1. Mild inebriation
2. Effects similar to alcohol intoxication: slurred speech, temporary short-term memory impairment and occasionally, mild hallucinations.
3. Altered state of consciousness. Senses, particularly vision, can be impaired.
4. Mind and body dissociation (out-of-body experiences). Strong hallucinations. Partial or all contact with senses may be lost. Effects at this phase are comparable to effects caused by Ketamine or PCP.

➤ **Examples of Medicines Containing Dextromethorphan (DXM):**

- Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold & Cough Medicine
- Coricidin HBP Cough & Cold
- Mucinex DM Tablets
- PediaCare Cough Medicines
- Dimetapp DM
- And found in the following products:
 - Robitussin Cough
 - TheraFlu Cough
 - Sudafed Cough
 - Triaminic Cough
 - Tylenol Cough & Tylenol Cold
 - Vicks 44 Cough Relief
 - Certain DayQuil/NightQuil LiquiCaps
 - Many Store Brands

➤ **Signs To Look For:**

- Slurred Speech
- Incoherence
- Redness of Face
- Paranoia
- Intoxication
- Excessive Sleeping
- Empty Medicine Bottles
- Excessive Sweating

- DXM is sometimes abused in combination with other medications, alcohol and/or drugs; increasing the dangerous effects.

➤ **Why Teens May Abuse DXM:**

- They mistakenly believe it's a “safe high” because it's readily available and in their or a friend's home.
- To enhance performance (i.e. when competing for college admission, sports, academic honors...).
- To cope with pressure related to school, work, social and extracurricular activities.

➤ **Other Resources:**

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/>

<http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/>

enetwork@samhsa.hhs.gov

<http://www.theantidrug.com/>

