Overview of Mental Health Medications for Children and Adolescents

Module 7
Miscellaneous Medications

Medications That Can Produce Anxiety Symptoms

- Anticonvulsants (carbamazepine, ethosuximide)
- Antidepressants (bupropion, SSRIs, TCAs)
- Antibiotics (cephalosporins, ofloxacin, isoniazid)
- Antiparkinson drugs (levodopa)
- Bronchodilators (albuterol, theophylline)
- Corticosteroids (prednisone, methylprednisone)

Medications That Can Produce Anxiety Symptoms

- Decongestants (pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine)
- NSAIDs (ibuprofen, indomethacin)
- Stimulants (amphetamines, caffeine, methylphenidate)
- Thyroid hormones (levothyroxine)
Medication-Induced Anxiety Symptoms

- Abrupt withdrawal of CNS depressants (alcohol, benzodiazepines, barbiturates)
- Medication toxicity
  - Anticholinergics
  - Antihistamines (diphenhydramine)

Drugs that can cause psychosis

- Antipsychotics
- Anticholinergics
- Steroids
- Hormones
- Benzodiazepines
- Psychostimulants
- Anticonvulsants

Herbal Medicine

- Juniper (hallucinations)
- Ma Huang (psychoses and mania)
- Ginseng (mania and insomnia)
- Echinacea (CNS stimulation)
- St John's wort (enhanced SSRI and/or MAOI activity)
Drugs that can cause Depression

- Narcotics
- Beta blockers
- Accutane
- Estrogens

Generation Rx

- Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey (2007)
  - 1 in 5 teens abuse prescription medications
  - 1 in 10 teens abuse OTC cough medicine
  - 1 in 4 teens know someone who uses OTC cough medicines to get high
- Monitoring the Future (2008)
  - Prescription opioid abuse among 12th graders - 9.2%
  - Past year OTC cough and cold medication abuse
    - 8th graders - 3.6%
    - 10th graders - 5.3%
    - 12th graders - 5.5%

Dextromethorphan (DXM) is...

- ... a safe and effective ingredient approved by FDA in 1954 and found in well over 100 over-the-counter cough medicines.
- ...the most widely used cough suppressant in the U.S.
- ...also being abused by taking extreme—sometimes as much as 20 to 50 times beyond the recommended dose—amounts of cough medicine to get high.
More Than 100 Cough & Cold Remedies Contain DXM

Sample of Products with DXM
- Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold & Cough medicine
- Coricidin HBP Cough and Cold
- Delsym medicines*
- Dimetapp DM
- Mucinex medicines*
- PediaCare cough medicines
- Robitussin cough medicines
- Sudafed cough medicines
- TheraFlu cough medicines
- Triaminic cough syrups
- Tylenol Cough and Cold medicines
- Vicks 44 Cough Relief medicines
- Vicks NyQuil and Dayquil medicines*
- Zicam
- Generic/store brands

* Certain products

The “High”
- Mild distortions of color and sound
- Strong visual hallucinations
- “Out-of-body” sensations
- Confusion
- Slurred speech
- Loss of motor control
The “Lows”

- Delusions
- Panic attacks
- Memory problems
- Blurred vision
- Stomach pain, nausea, and vomiting
- High blood pressure and rapid heart beat
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Drowsiness and dizziness
- Fever and headaches
- Rashes and itchy skin
- Loss of consciousness

Side Effects Can Be Worsened if...

- The medicine contains additional ingredients that treat more than just cough;
- Abuse happens with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- DXM is abuse in combination with prescription drugs and/or other medications.

Cough medicine abuse Slang

- Dex or DXM
- Robo
- Triple Cs or CCC
- Skittles
- Syrup or Tussin
- Roboing
- Robo-tripping Robo-fizzling
- Skittling
The Internet

Many web sites and online communities advocate and promote cough medicine abuse.

Why the Internet?

* There are many web sites and online communities that advocate and promote the abuse of DXM-containing cough medicine;
* Some serve as dangerous online drug dealers, with kids being able to purchase large amounts of pure DXM.

Web sites provide information about...

* How to achieve a high based on user’s height and weight;
* How to combine DXM-containing medicines with other drugs, alcohol, etc., and what effects are to be expected at specific dosage levels.
Postings on Social Networks

- Detailed instructions and conversations about DXM abuse;
- Blogs and videos with postings of how and when kids will take DXM-containing cough medicines;
- Footage of kids while "high."

Reasons for Abuse

- Academics - studying for test or major project
- Athletic competitions
- Weight loss
- Enhance the effect of alcohol or other drugs

Pharming Parties or Trailmixing

- Everyone brings prescription or OTC drugs
- Pills placed in bowl
- Everyone grabs a handful of pills
- Alcohol may or may not be involved
Diphenhydramine Abuse

- High doses used for sleep or as sedative
- Hallucinations can occur at doses of 150-700 mg
- Can produce severe arrhythmias and add to sedative effect of other drugs or alcohol

Ambien

- Street names
  - A-Minus
  - Zombie Pills
- Use larger doses and resist urge to sleep
- Causes hallucinations and blackouts
- Date rapes can occur during blackouts
- Can cause fatalities especially if combined with alcohol

Medication Abuse

- Stimulants
  - Methylphenidate
  - Adderal
  - Provigil
- Benzodiazepines
  - Xanax
  - Valium
  - Clonazepam
- Narcotics (lortab)