What is DXM?

Dextromethorphan (DXM) is a cough-suppressing ingredient in a variety of over-the-counter (OTC) cold and cough medications. It is found in more than 125 OTC products and comes in various forms, most commonly in cough suppressants in caplet or liquid form. Medications in brands such as Robitussin, Vicks, and Coricidin HBP, Dimetapp DM, TheraFlu Cough and Cold, Vicks 44 cough relief products and Nyquil Liquicaps are sometimes abused. DXM abuse may involve drinking large volumes of OTC liquid cough medicines. More recently, abuse of gel capsule and tablet medicines has increased.

What are the street names for DXM?

Skittling, Tussing, Robo-Tripping, Triple Cs and Dex

What are the health effects of DXM?

Dextromethorphan is a safe and effective cough suppressant when used as indicated on the product label. However, when taken in doses that far exceed the amount recommended, the ingredient may produce feelings of euphoria that some seek to get "high." Overdose can also occur. Other physical effects include:

- Loss of consciousness
- Memory problems
- High blood pressure
- Blurred vision
- Panic attacks
- Nausea
- Loss of coordination
- Stomach pain
- Delusions
- Numbness in fingers and toes
- Rashes and itchy skin
- Dizziness
- Fever
- Headache

What can parents do?

- Supervise your child’s activities, know who their friends are and monitor their surroundings.
- Notice changes in behavior.
- Talk to your teen about the dangers of DXM abuse.
- Know the signs of DXM abuse which include:
  - Empty cough medicine boxes in their room, backpack or garbage
  - Missing bottles of medication
  - Change in friends, physical appearance or sleeping patterns
  - Declining grades
  - Unusual chemical or medicinal smells
  - Internet orders (unexpected packages or payments by credit card or PayPal)
  - Loss of interest in hobbies or favorite activities

Resources:

Oakland County Health Division/Office of Substance Abuse Services (OCHD/OSAS)
Prior Authorization and Central Evaluation Program (PACE Program) PACE is the first step to substance abuse treatment services for low income residents in Oakland County. 248-858-5200 or 888-350-0900, ext. 85200

Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Alcoholics Anonymous .................................................. 248-332-3521
Alanon ................................................................................. 248-706-1020
Narcotics Anonymous ..................................................... 248-543-7200
Program and Prevention Information .................................. 248-858-0001
Treatment Information PACE ........................................... 1-888-350-0900, ext. 85200