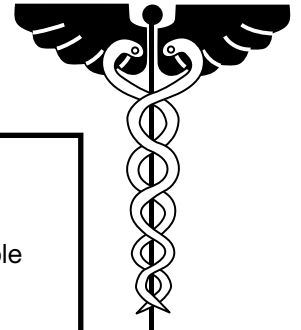


# OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS



## Facts About Drugs

### WHAT THEY ARE

**Names:** antihistamines, decongestants, cough syrups, pain relievers, mouthwashes, reducing aids, sleeping aids, stimulants, alcohol, caffeine, look-alikes, act-alikes

**Type:** psychoactive

**Forms:** tablets, capsules, powders, solutions, sprays, chewing gum

**Combinations:** cold and cough preparations with alcohol, antihistamines and/or decongestants; mouthwash with alcohol; aspirin with caffeine and/or acetaminophen; amphetamine (speed) look-alike with caffeine, PPA, ephedrine; quaalude (lude) look-alike with acetaminophen or aspirin; cocaine (coke) look-alike with caffeine, PPA, ephedrine and benzocaine, lidocaine, procaine or tetracaine

**Usage:** swallowed; injected; sniffed (snorted)

**Legal Status:** legal

### WHAT THEY FEEL LIKE

varies from mild single drug effects to extreme combination drug effect; alertness, anxiety, restlessness, confusion, dizziness, numbness, lightheadedness, mild euphoria, drowsiness, relaxation, nausea, headache, hostility, delirium, excitement, body tension; look-alike amphetamine: agitation, hallucination; look-alike cocaine: rush of euphoria, anxiety

### WHAT THEY DO

**To Your Mind:** stimulate or depress central nervous system, especially respiratory center

**To Your Body:** alter heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing, interfere with control of body movements and reflex actions

**Special Characteristics:** Depressant effect is intensified if antihistamines, alcohol, tranquilizers and like drugs are combined.

Nose sprays cause “nasal rebound effect” and dependence. Cold pills combined with cough syrups can double dosage and side effects of all drugs. Small children are strongly affected by alcohol-based drugs. Aspirin should be avoided before surgery. It interacts with various prescription drugs and can cause internal bleeding when combined with alcohol. Aspirin use for children under age 16 with chicken pox or flu can bring on Reye’s syndrome. Aspirin is the most common cause of accidental poisoning in children. Ibuprofen may have side effects for those allergic to aspirin. PPA can cause heart palpitations. Indocin and PPA can raise blood pressure to life-threatening levels.

### HOW THEY CAN HURT YOU

- hypertension
- inability to sleep
- changes in blood pressure and heart functions
- respiratory depression
- individual allergic or psychotic reactions
- kidney and liver damage
- coma

### WHEN TO GET HELP

- Do you take more medication than is recommended?
- Is your work or school performance affected by your drug use?
- Are you having problems with family and friends?
- Are you spending more on drugs than you can afford?
- Do you use a variety of drugs?

**FACT:**  
*Aspirin is one of the top five drugs involved in emergency room visits for poisoning.*