



# OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) DRUG FACT SHEET



Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are medications available without a prescription at drugstores or supermarkets. *Source: www.addictioncenter.com*

## Health Problems from Abusing OTC Meds



Memory loss



Kidney failure



Heart problems



Death

## COMMONLY ABUSED OTC MEDS

### ➤ Cough medicines (Dextromethorphan, or DXM)

Cough medicines can cause hallucinations and a potent high when abused.

### ➤ Cold medicines (Pseudoephedrine)

Pseudoephedrine is a stimulant and the active ingredient in many cold medicines. It is used to relieve nasal and sinus congestion from colds or allergies and may also relieve congestion.

### ➤ Motion sickness pills (Dimenhydrinate)

Dimenhydrinate is used to treat motion sickness and vertigo.



## What is Loperamide Addiction?

According to WebMD, "Loperamide, the drug in Imodium, can be addictive and even lethal, especially at high doses. People with a history of opioid addiction may be more vulnerable to becoming addicted to loperamide."

## INFO ON LOPERAMIDE

The 2017 article published in Annals of Emergency Medicine explains that, at high doses, loperamide can mimic the high of an opioid.

Common side effects of loperamide may include:

- Flatulence
- Dry mouth
- Stomach cramps
- Dizziness
- Drowsiness
- Vomiting
- Headache
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Problems urinating



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## Did You Know...

Learning to spot an OTC drug addiction can be difficult. OTC drugs like Tylenol and various cough medicines don't carry the same dangerous image as illicit drugs like heroin. Some of the signs of an OTC drug addiction include continuing to use the drugs despite known consequences and spending an excessive amount of time or money using or getting them.

The above information was obtained from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

## NEED HELP?



24/7 Mental Health and  
AODA Crisis Line  
(Northwest Connections)  
1-888-552-6642



Please Note: If you suspect an overdose, call 911 to get the person medical attention immediately!