

OTC Meds and You

DO – follow the dosage amounts and instructions

DO – take the smallest dose possible that gives relief

DO – use sparingly, for the most severe attacks

DO – Let someone know

DON'T – take more than instructed

DON'T – operate machinery or equipment when impaired

DON'T – mix with alcohol

DON'T – double up on meds with the same active ingredient

OTC Meds & OSHA

- OSHA does not require record keeping for OTC meds; they are considered first aid.
 - Prescriptions for OTC meds are not recordable as long as the prescription is not for more than the OTC dosage.
 - OTC meds prescribed at strengths higher than the OTC dosage ARE recordable
- 1904.7(b)(5)(ii)(A)**

One single dose of diphenhydramine, the active ingredient in many allergy medications, has the same effect on driving as being 2 points above the legal blood alcohol limit of most states.



Allergies, Meds, and Machinery

Preventing OTC Meds from Causing Accidents

♪♪♪ Within The Sounds, of Sneezing. . . . ♪♪♪

Every year, just as winter quickly exits our lives, spring comes roaring in. The grass turns green almost overnight, and the pine trees load up with buds. That time is now, meaning that it's almost time for, "The Pollening".

For most, pollen is at best a nuisance, and at worst, walking misery. If you are one of the lucky few that are not bothered by pollen, consider yourself blessed. If you are in the misery crowd, then you are probably familiar with the wide assortment of over-the-counter (OTC) allergy medications available. Thankfully, these medicines, known as anti-histamines, provide temporary relief from the effects of pollen. However, the relief comes with costly side effects; reduced motor function, impairment, and drowsiness.

The Harris Market Research company conducted a survey in 2002 that showed that over 60% of adults admit to taking more than the instructed amount of OTC medications. Either by increasing the dosage, decreasing the time between doses, or increasing the doses per day.

Why is this a problem?

Doesn't taking more medicine increase the effect and make me feel better, faster?

No, it does not. If it did, don't you think the manufacturer would recommend you take more, so they can sell more? Taking more than the instructed dosage does not increase the effectiveness of the medication. But, it DOES INCREASE the side effects.

The University of Iowa conducted a study comparing the effects of the active ingredient in Benadryl (DPH), alcohol consumption, and the combination of the two on drowsiness, and the ability to operate a vehicle. They found that the recommended dosage of DPH had more impairing effects than having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.1%. And, the combination of the two obviously provided the most impairment.

Additionally, the Benadryl group reported "feeling" no different after taking the medication, despite their reduced ability to operate a vehicle.

So, just because a medication is over-the-counter, does not mean you are not at risk for side effects, impairment, drowsiness, or decreased ability to safely perform your job. Follow the dosing directions, and let someone know so that they can help keep you safe as well.

Contact Safe Workforce today for your safety and training needs!

