

Cough Drugs

Coughs are usually caused by impacted mucus waste congestion in the upper respiratory tract. They are brief in duration, self-limiting, get better in a week or less and do not require drugs. The new Handbook of Prescription Drugs states that the cough reflex is protective and rids the respiratory tract of mucus and phlegm secretions. The suppression of coughs is dangerous and keeps waste in the body. A runny nose is nasal mucus secretion, which promotes drainage and should not be treated with drugs.

There are two types of drugs for colds

- 1.) **Antitussives**
- 2.) **Expectorants.**

Antitussives poison and deaden the nerves in the brain that cause a cough reflex. They include non-narcotic drugs (**dextromethorphan**) and narcotic drugs (**hydrocodone, codeine**).

Expectorants act "on-site" or peripherally and according to the viscosity (thickness) or increase sputum volume (amount secreted).

Aside from this, expectorants cause gastrointestinal problems. Some ingredients such as **Ammonium chloride** in expectorants cause problems. Ammonium chloride causes kidney, lung and liver problems and acidic blood.

The cough ingredient **guaifenesin** (glyceryl guaiacolate) has not been proven to decrease viscosity (thickness) of bronchial mucus secretion or stimulate respiratory tract fluid secretions and **Ipecac** induces vomiting and overdose can cause death, it is classified as a potentially hazardous.

They are irrational ingredients in cough and expectorant Over The Counter (OTC) drugs and prescription drugs.