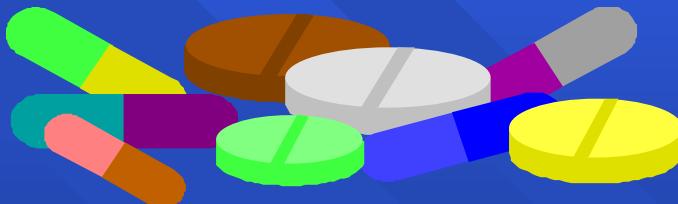


Chapter 9: Over-the-Counter (OTC)



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Prescription & OTC Drugs

Prescription drugs are available only by recommendation of an authorized health professional, such as a physician.

Nonprescription (over-the-counter, or OTC) drugs are available on request and do not require approval by a health professional.



Prescription & OTC Drugs

- Prescription and OTC drugs have been viewed differently by the public since the classifications were established by the Durham-Humphrey Amendment of 1951.
- In general, the public views OTC drugs as minimally effective and safe and prescription drugs as more potent and frequently dangerous
- However, these distinctions are not always accurate

OTC Drugs Interesting Facts

- Each year the U.S. spends over \$14 billion on OTC drugs
- More than 300,000 different OTC products are available on the market
- OTC expenditures comprise 60% of the annual drug purchase in the U.S.
- An estimated 3 out of 4 people routinely self-medicate with these drug products

Abuse of OTC products

- OTC products generally have a greater margin of safety than their prescription counterparts, but issues of abuse need to be considered.
- Physical dependence
 - Psychological dependence

Abuse of OTC products

- Nonprescription products that can be severely habit-forming: decongestants, laxatives, antihistamines, sleep aids, antacids and ephedrine.
- The active ingredients in OTC drugs have been classified and placed in category I (considered safe and effective)
- However, as recently as 1992, the FDA has banned over 400 ingredients from 7 categories of OTC products.

“Switching” policy of the FDA

- The FDA is attempting to make more drugs available to the general public by switching some frequently used and safe prescription medications to OTC status.
- This policy is in response to public demand to have access to effective drugs for self-medication and has resulted in over 63 switched ingredients, such as ulcer and hair-growing medications

OTC drugs and self-care

- More than one-third of the time people treat their routine health problems with OTC medications to receive symptomatic relief from their ailments.
- If done correctly, self-care with OTC medications can provide significant relief from minor, self-limiting health problems at minimal cost.

OTC Labels

Required label information includes:

- Approved uses of the product
- Detailed instructions on safe and effective use
- Cautions or warnings to those at greatest risk when taking the medication

Label information controlled by the FDA

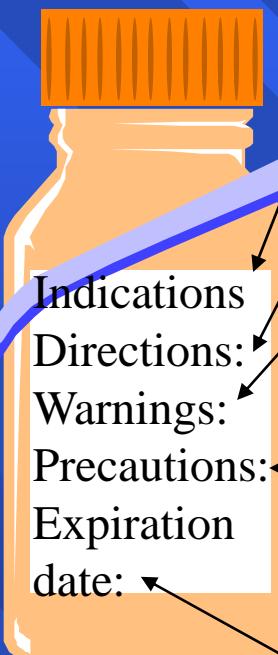
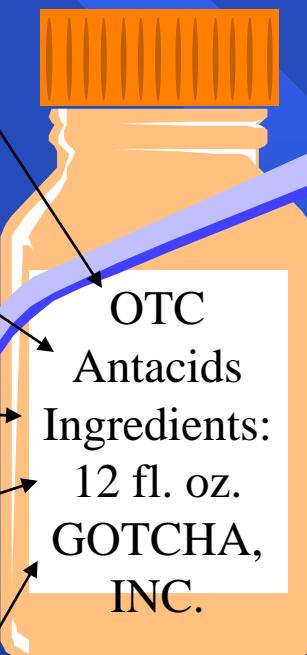
Product name

Identity

Active ingredients

Quantity

Manufacturer



When to use

How to use

What to watch for

Possible drug interactions

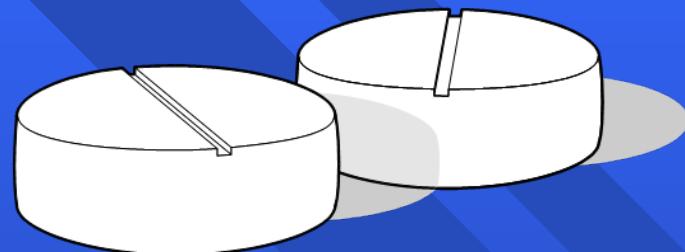
When drug should no longer be used

Rules for proper OTC drug use

- Always know what you are taking.
- Know the effects.
- Read and heed the warnings and cautions.
- Don't use anything for more than 1 to 2 wks.
- Be particularly cautious if also taking prescription drugs.
- If you have questions, ask a pharmacist.
- If you don't need it, don't use it!

Types of OTC drugs

- Internal analgesics
 - Analgesics
 - Salicylates
- Therapeutic considerations
 - Analgesic actions
 - Anti-inflammatory effects
 - Antipyretic effects
 - Side effects



Types of OTC drugs

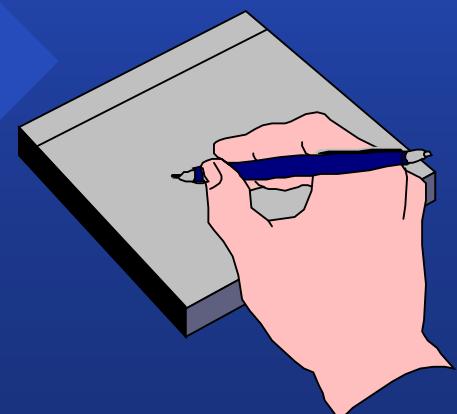
- Cold, allergy and cough remedies
 - Decongestants
 - Antitussives
 - Expectorants
 - Vitamin C
- Sleep aids
 - Melatonin
- Stimulants
 - “Look-alike” and “act-alike” drugs

Types of OTC drugs

- Gastrointestinal medication
 - Antacids and anti-heartburn medication
- Diet aids
- Skin products
 - Acne medications
 - Sun products
- Skin first-aid products
- OTC herbal products

Prescription drugs

- There are currently more than 10,000 prescription products sold in the United States, representing
 - Approximately 1500 different drugs
 - With 20 to 50 new medications approved each year by the FDA





Prescription drugs



- According to the Durham-Humphrey Amendment of 1951, drugs are controlled with prescription if they are:
 - Habit-forming
 - Not safe for self-medication
 - Intended to treat ailments that require the supervisions of a health professional
 - New and without an established safe track record

Doctor-patient communication

- When a physician prescribes a drug, a patient should insist on answers to the following questions:
- What is the desired outcome?
- What are the possible side effects of the drug?
- How should the drug be taken to minimize problems and maximize benefits?

Generic and proprietary drugs

- Generic is the official, nonpatented, nonproprietary name of a drug. The term generic is used by the public to refer to the common name of a drug that is not subject to trademark rights.
- Proprietary a brand or trademark name that is registered with the U.S. Patent Office. Proprietary denoted medications marketed under specific brand names, i.e., Valium.

Common categories of prescription drugs

- Analgesics
 - Low-potency (Darvon)
 - Moderate potency (Percodan)
 - High-potency (Demerol)
- Antibiotics
 - Antibacterials
- Antidepressants



Common categories of prescription drugs

- Antidiabetic drugs
- Antiepileptic drugs
- Antiulcer drugs
- Bronchodilators



Common categories of prescription drugs

- Cardiovascular drugs
 - Antihypertensive agents
 - Antianginal agents
 - Drugs to treat congestive heart failure
 - Cholesterol and lipid-lowering drugs
- Hormone-related drugs
- Sedative-hypnotic agents
- Drugs to treat HIV



