



**SUBSTANCE ABUSE ALERT
WV002**

TO: West Virginia

FROM: Elizabeth J. Scharman, Pharm.D., DABAT, BCPS, FAACT; Director, West Virginia Poison Center

DATE: September 15, 2015

DISTRIBUTION: Director, Office of Healthy Schools, hospital emergency departments, community health providers; Director, WV Emergency Medical Services, Regional Medical Directors, emergency medical services personnel, local health departments, WV Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services, State Epidemiology Outcomes Workgroup members, local health departments, agencies working with substance abuse,

**High School Students Snorting Non-prescription Medications:
Benadryl, Mucinex D**

Benadryl is a brand name allergy medicine which contains the medication: diphenhydramine

To snort the medication, the tablet form would need to be crushed or the capsules would need to be opened.

Mucinex is a brand name product line used for wet coughs, dry coughs, colds, and/or sinus congestion

Mucinex contains guaifenesin only – this drug is not toxic

Mucinex D contains guaifenesin + pseudoephedrine (60 mg or 120 mg)

Mucinex DM contains guaifenesin + dextromethorphan (30 mg or 60 mg)

Current Problem

The WV Poison Center has been made aware that 11th and 12th graders in WV have recently admitted to snorting Benadryl and Mucinex D. Some students have been selling these drugs to fellow students. They stated that their goal is a “cocaine-like” effect. Reports have been from a variety of student demographics including some top students.

It is the experience of the WV Poison Center that when non-prescription drugs are involved, not all children buy the product they have heard about (meaning in this case, a student may actually purchase Mucinex or Mucinex DM instead of Mucinex D).

Recommendations

Please report cases to the West Virginia Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 so that this trend can be monitored.

School employees, parents, and health care providers should be on the look-out for adolescents with any of the following: altered behavior, hallucinations, persistent nasal congestion not explained by an obvious medical cause, bloody noses (without a history of bloody noses), powder under the nostrils, or students with any of these drugs on their person or in lockers/room. The West Virginia Poison Center can be consulted for management recommendations.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Poison Center on behalf of the Substance Abuse Early Warning Network (a product of the WV State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup and the WV Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities). Receiving entities are responsible for further dissemination of the information as appropriate to the target audience.

Message Categories:

Network Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance, warrants immediate action or attention.

Network Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation.

Network Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation.