

Safe Driving



OVER-THE-COUNTER COLD MEDICATION

This time of year cold and flu season is in full swing. You know the symptoms: body aches, slight fever, general fatigue, headache, nasal congestion, sore throat and a dry, hacking cough. That's when many of us reach for one of the many products available over the counter to relieve these symptoms.

Everyone knows the dangers of drinking alcohol and driving, but many drivers don't realize that driving after taking over-the-counter cold medications can be just as dangerous. Research has shown that some common medications cause drowsiness, blurred vision or

dizziness that can impair a driver's ability in much the same way as drinking alcoholic beverages.

If your job requires you to drive, here are a few things to consider when taking over-the-counter cold medications:

- Read the label and be alert for warnings associated with the medication.
- Take the medication according to the instructions.
- Check the expiration date and do not use if it's expired.

- If the package looks like it has been tampered with, do not use it.
- Ask your doctor or the pharmacist about possible adverse side effects.
- Never take any medication prescribed for someone else. It may work for them, but could be harmful to you.

Over-the-counter medications can be effective for symptoms of the common cold. However, keep in mind that these medicines may pose side effects that could impair your ability to safely operate a motor vehicle. And if you're in doubt, don't drive; it could save your life.

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