



ALLERGIES and O-T-C PRODUCT PRECAUTIONS

... the life you save may be your own

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With the windy months coming up, many will suffer from allergies. Allergic rhinitis is characterized by sneezing, nasal itching and irritation, runny nose, congestion, red watery eyes, headache, and an impaired sense of smell. Allergies may be triggered by many different allergens. These allergens, (i.e. pet dander, pollen, dust mites, mold spores, others) combined with the winds, make this condition worse. In the haste to relieve the symptoms, some may take over-the-counter medications without taking into account their prescription medications already being taken.



IMPORTANT: Before taking any over-the-counter (o-t-c) medication, herbal or dietary supplement, it is essential that you first read the product packaging Drug Facts, Active Ingredients, Uses, and Warnings, and/or Check with your doctor or pharmacist to determine if there are any known interactions or contraindications with other prescribed medications, medical conditions, pregnancy or breast-feeding.

The following active ingredients of o-t-c products may interact with other prescribed medications, herbals or dietary supplements: **Antihistamines** are commonly taken for the relief of runny nose, itching and sneezing.



These antihistamines include o-t-c products containing brompheniramine, chlorpheniramine, clemastine, diphenhydramine, and loratadine.

Nasal Decongestants are also commonly taken for the relief of nasal congestion. These decongestants include o-t-c products containing pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine.

Many antihistamines and decongestants may interact with other medications being taken.

Examples of o-t-c antihistamine and nasal decongestant combination products include: *Tylenol Allergy and Sinus*® (chlorpheniramine maleate 2 mg., pseudoephedrine hydrochloride 30 mg., acetaminophen 500 mg.); *Benadryl Allergy Decongestant*® (diphenhydramine hydrochloride 25 mg., pseudoephedrine hydrochloride 60 mg.); *Equate Allergy Formula*® (diphenhydramine hydrochloride 25 mg.); and *Coricidin*® (acetaminophen 325 mg., chlorpheniramine maleate 2 mg.).

Examples of o-t-c product interactions include:

- Phenytoin (*Dilantin*®) and chlorpheniramine may result in an increased risk of phenytoin toxicity manifested by trouble walking, hyperactive reflexes, uncontrollable eye movements, and tremor.
- Some may even have interactions with *herbals*: Bitter Orange and pseudoephedrine may result in hypertensive crisis as manifested by headache, elevated temperature, and dangerously high blood pressure.

REMINDER: If you have any questions about your medications, herbals or dietary supplements or have possibly experienced an adverse reaction or poisoning, **Please CALL Our Bilingual Pharmacist/Nurse Specialists in Poison Information at Our 24-Hour/365-day Thomason Hospital's West Texas Regional Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.**



1-800-222-1222