



# Plumas County Public Health Agency Plumas County Sheriff's Office



## For Immediate Release:

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### Warning Regarding the Dangers of Abusing Over-the Counter Medication

are warning parents and guardians after a recent event in the county involving youth intentionally taking high doses of the allergy medicine diphenhydramine, commonly known as Benadryl. The misuse caused serious health complications. Some teens are misusing over-the-counter medicines; such as Benadryl and Cough Suppressant (Syrup) by taking too much or using them in unsafe ways to try to get high or follow dangerous social media trends.

Excessive use of Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) can be extremely dangerous and may lead to:

- hallucinations
- seizures
- coma
- death

Poison Control also warns that overdose can happen quickly and become life-threatening.

Excessive use of Cough Suppressants (Dextromethorphan)(DXM) can affect the central nervous system;

- impaired motor function
- numbness
- increased heart rate
- stomach issues
- In severe cases, it may cause slow breathing or permanent brain damage.

### What Parents/Guardians Should Know:

- Some teens may think over-the-counter medicines are safe because they can be bought without a prescription.
- Warning signs may include missing pills/medication, unusual sleepiness, confusion, or sudden behavior changes.

### What You Can Do:

- Keep medications stored safely and monitor how much medicine is in the home.
- Teach children to only take medicine as directed by a parent, guardian, or healthcare provider.
- *If you suspect an overdose or medical emergency, call 911 immediately.*

For questions about medications contact California Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

