

ANTI-HISTAMINES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

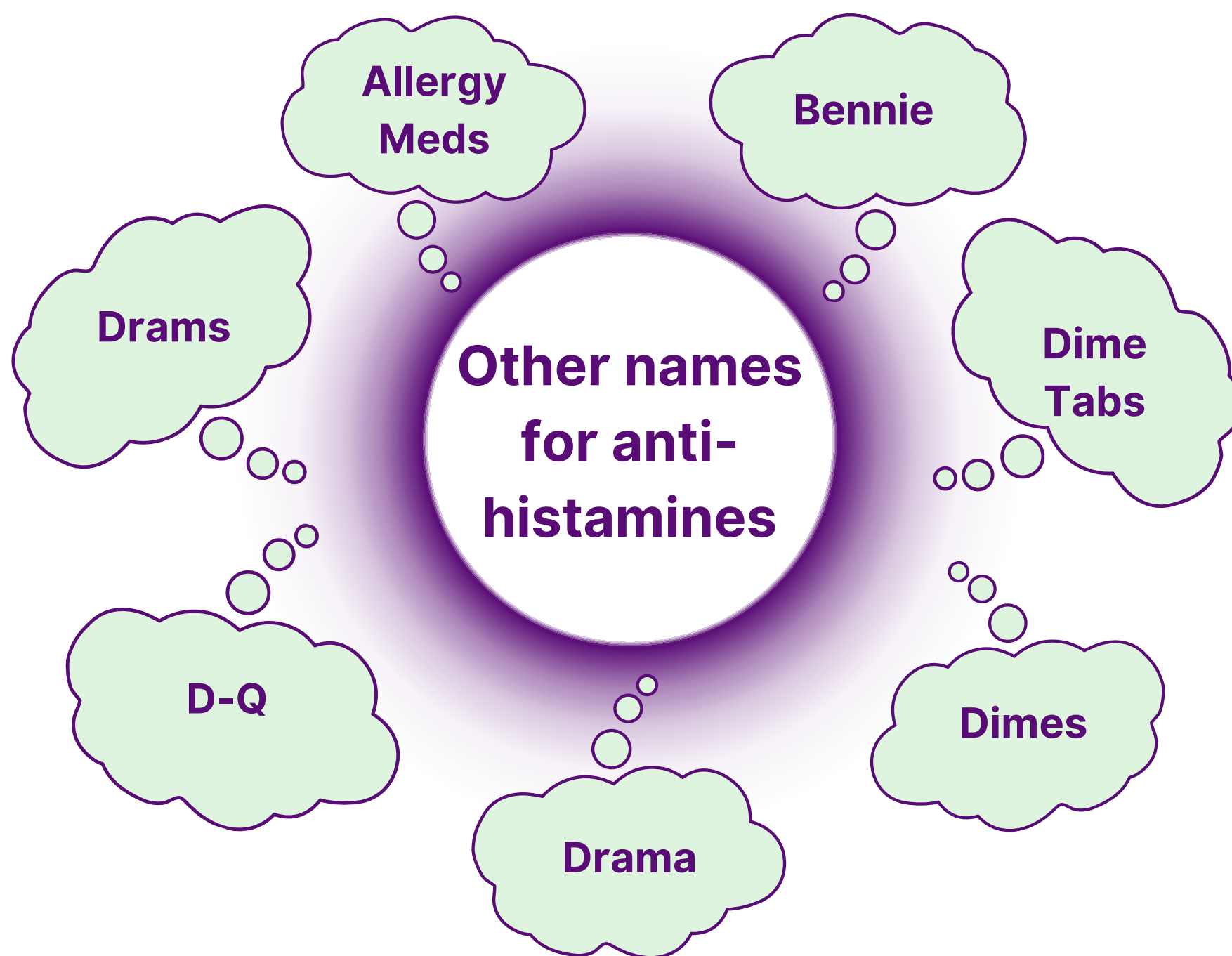
What are they?

Antihistamines are sedatives



Over the counter antihistamines include dimenhydrinate (Gravol) and diphenhydramine (Benadryl, Zzquil and Sleep-eze). At their recommended doses, they are safe and effective for many things, like nausea, allergies, and sleep.

Antihistamines can be very dangerous when used in higher doses, or when used for things other than their intended purpose. High doses may produce a euphoric (mind-altering) effect.



How are they used?

Antihistamines can be taken orally.



What are the effects?



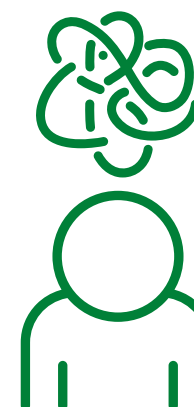
Antihistamines can cause intense drowsiness. This can lead to injuries while doing everyday tasks, like driving and cooking.



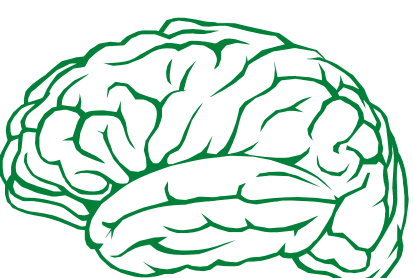
Rather than becoming drowsy, young children may become over-excited and irritable from antihistamines.



High doses of antihistamines can affect the ability to breath.



Regular use of antihistamines may cause memory loss, constant tiredness, and delirium.



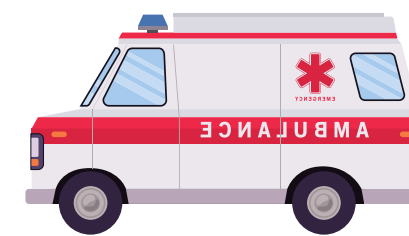
High doses can also create a feeling of lightheadedness and confusion. This may lead to hallucinations.



Antihistamines can cause a dry mouth, blurred vision, and difficulty going to the bathroom.

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When do you seek emergency help?



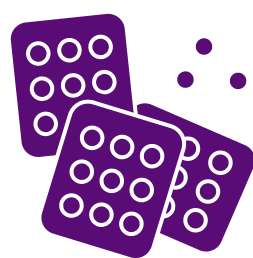
Overdose or poisoning: Taking too much of an antihistamine, or combining it with another sedating substance (e.g., alcohol).

Signs: Adults may become unconscious and have shallow or no breathing. It can resemble a coma (complete unresponsiveness). Young children may become very irritable, twitch, or have seizures.

Get help right away! Anti-histamine overdoses or poisonings can be fatal.

Did you know?

Antihistamines are a popular drug of choice for youth for many reasons: they are easily accessible, cheap, and are perceived as safer than other substances because they can be legally purchased over-the-counter.



How to stay safer

1

Not using antihistamines is the safest choice, though it may not be realistic for everyone.

2

Don't mix! Mixing antihistamines with other substances (e.g., alcohol, opioids) can greatly increase the risk of an overdose or poisoning.

3

Know your supply. Prepackaged antihistamines sold in drug stores have a much lower chance of being mixed with other substances.

4

Ask an adult! If in doubt over how much of an antihistamine to take, ask a trusted adult. This lowers the risk of accidentally taking too much.

5

Timing matters. Avoid using an antihistamine before work, school, or operating a vehicle (e.g. car, ATV), as it can impair your reaction time and concentration.

6

Start low and go slow. Try a small amount to see how it affects you before deciding to take more.

7

Don't use alone. Have a friend or family member with you in case you need help.

Mixed in other drugs

Antihistamines may be mixed with other substances to enhance the "high" or reduce a side effect.

Opioids, such as fentanyl, may contain antihistamines to reduce the itchy side effect.

Combining an antihistamine with an opioid increases the risk of drowsiness and **accidental overdose**.

It can be nearly impossible to tell if a substance has an antihistamine mixed in!

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www.DECYDE.ca