

When Taking Care Of Your Cough, Accurate Dosing Is Key

(NAPSA)—During the winter, cold-related cough is increasingly common as respiratory germs spread easily. Avoiding the spread of germs is the first step to keeping you and your family healthy. Remember to practice frequent hand washing, avoid contact with people affected with cold and flu and use a germ-killing disinfectant to clean surfaces.

Cough control is important for good personal and public health. According to the Centers for Disease Control, many serious respiratory illnesses can be spread through coughing. Severe cough may also interfere with a patient's daily life—affecting everything from sleep to physical activities to mental alertness.

While there is no cure for the common cold, selecting the right therapy is important. The choices for controlling cough are more limited following recent Food and Drug Administration (FDA) action to remove more than 200 prescription cough medicines containing hydrocodone from the market because of reports about medication errors and confusion over naming. Questions and answers about the FDA's enforcement action regarding unapproved hydrocodone drug products are available at www.fda.gov/cder/drug/unapproved_drugs/hydrocodone_qa.htm.

A recent study, "Accuracy of oral liquid measuring devices: Comparison of dosing cup and oral dosing syringe," published in 2008 in *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy*, also



highlights concerns about accurate dosing. The study, conducted by P. Sobhani, J. Christopherson, P.J. Ambrose and R.L. Corelli, found that 85 percent of caregivers measured an excessive dose of liquid medication when using a dosing cup; only 4 percent measured an accurate dose with the cup.

For patients 6 years of age and older who are suffering from a cold-related cough and are not finding symptomatic relief through over-the-counter remedies, a new course of antitussive treatment is available: TussiCaps® (hydrocodone polistirex/chlorpheniramine polistirex) extended-release capsules. TussiCaps® is the first and only FDA-approved hydrocodone/chlorpheniramine capsule for the relief of cold-related cough in adults and children 6 years of age and older, providing powerful cough suppression for up to 12 hours.

"TussiCaps® utilizes hydrocodone, which is a well-tolerated and powerful antitussive, provid-

ing patients with up to 12 hours of cough relief in an encapsulated form conducive to accurate and safe dosing," said Herbert Neuman, M.D., chief medical officer and vice president, Regulatory Affairs, Covidien Imaging Solutions and Pharmaceutical Products. "TussiCaps® is biologically equivalent to Tussionex® liquid but offers the precision and convenience of a capsule to patients who need powerful cough relief."

When faced with a cold or cough, medication should be selected carefully. Patients should first consult their physician or pharmacist to discuss their specific symptoms and review any existing health conditions and other medications they are currently taking. Always check to see that the product is the right medicine for your symptoms and avoid medicines that treat symptoms you're not experiencing.

TussiCaps® is contraindicated in children under the age of 6 due to the risk of fatal respiratory depression and in patients with a known allergy to hydrocodone or chlorpheniramine. The most common adverse reactions include sedation, drowsiness and mental clouding, which may impair the mental and/or physical abilities required for potentially hazardous tasks. As with other drugs in this class, there is the possibility of tolerance and/or dependence, particularly in patients with a history of drug dependence. See package insert for full prescribing information for TussiCaps®.