

COUGH/COLD COMBINATIONS (Systemic)

Bromhexine

Indications

Accepted

Cough (treatment)¼Combination products containing antitussives and/or expectorants may be indicated for the symptomatic relief of cough due to colds and minor upper respiratory infections. 1

Cough and nasal congestion (treatment)¼Combination products containing antitussives and/or expectorants, and nasal decongestants may be indicated for the symptomatic relief of cough and nasal congestion due to the common cold and other respiratory infections. Also, products containing antihistamines may provide relief of the cough, nasal congestion, rhinorrhea, and sneezing associated with allergy and the common cold. However, controlled clinical studies have not demonstrated that antihistamines are significantly more effective than placebo in relieving cold symptoms. 2

Cold symptoms (treatment)¼Combination products containing antihistamines, antitussives or expectorants, nasal decongestants, and analgesics may be indicated for the temporary relief of coughs, nasal congestion, and associated aches, pains, and general discomfort due to colds, flu, or allergy. The antihistamine in these cold combinations may provide relief of nasal congestion, rhinorrhea, and sneezing. It may also serve as an adjunct because of its anticholinergic drying effects. However, in many cough/cold combinations, the dosage level of the antihistamine is below that required to obtain a significant effect. Also, controlled clinical studies have not demonstrated that antihistamines are significantly more effective than placebo in relieving cold symptoms. 2

Unaccepted

Cough/cold combination products that contain both an antitussive and an expectorant usually do not offer any advantage over products that contain only one of these agents. In some cases, their combination may be detrimental in the treatment of coughs, since antitussives should be used only in the treatment of dry coughs and not for productive coughs.

Some products containing an anticholinergic have been used to help dry excessive nasal secretions associated with the common cold and allergic rhinitis; however, the efficacy of anticholinergics for this use in these combination products has not been established. In most products, the anticholinergic is included in doses below the therapeutic level in an attempt to prevent abuse by deliberate overdosage (e.g., in combinations containing a narcotic antitussive) 23.

Combination products that contain an analgesic are generally not recommended for regular use for the treatment of cold symptoms during the common cold or acute allergic rhinitis since they may mask fever, which may indicate a secondary bacterial infection.

Ammonium chloride, calcium iodide, citric acid, guaicol carbonate, iodinated glycerol, ipecac, potassium citrate, potassium guaiacolsulfonate, potassium iodide, and sodium citrate are included as expectorants in these combinations; however, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not found them to be useful for this indication. Therefore, FDA has requested manufacturers to reformulate their products to replace these ingredients with guaifenesin. 8

Pharmacology/Pharmacokinetics

Antihistamine-containing^{3/4}See Antihistamines (Systemic) .

Decongestant-containing^{3/4}See:
Ephedrine in Bronchodilators, Adrenergic (Systemic) .
Phenylpropanolamine (Systemic).
Pseudoephedrine (Systemic).

Dextromethorphan-containing^{3/4}See Dextromethorphan (Systemic) .

Opioid (narcotic) antitussive-containing^{3/4}See Opioid (Narcotic) Analgesics (Systemic) .

Expectorant-containing^{3/4}See:
Guaifenesin (Systemic).

Analgesic-containing^{3/4}See:
Acetaminophen (Systemic).
Acetaminophen and Salicylates (Systemic).
Salicylates (Systemic).

Homatropine-containing^{3/4}See Anticholinergics/Antispasmodics (Systemic) .

Precautions to Consider

Antihistamine-containing^{3/4}See Antihistamines (Systemic) .

Antihistamine- and decongestant-containing^{3/4}See Antihistamines and Decongestants (Systemic) .

Decongestant-containing^{3/4}See:
Ephedrine in Bronchodilators, Adrenergic (Systemic) .
Phenylpropanolamine (Systemic).
Pseudoephedrine (Systemic).

Dextromethorphan-containing^{3/4}See Dextromethorphan (Systemic) .

Opioid (narcotic) antitussive-containing^{3/4}See Opioid (Narcotic) Analgesics (Systemic) .

Expectorant-containing^{3/4}See:
Guaifenesin (Systemic).

Analgesic-containing^{3/4}See:
Acetaminophen (Systemic).
Acetaminophen and Salicylates (Systemic).
Salicylates (Systemic).

Homatropine-containing^{3/4}See Anticholinergics/Antispasmodics (Systemic) .

