



Effective Health Care

Effectiveness of Over-the-Counter Cough and Cold Medications Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Effectiveness of over-the-counter cough and cold medications was found to be addressed by an existing systematic review by the Cochrane Collaboration titled *Over-the-counter medications for acute cough in children and adults in ambulatory settings*. Given that the existing report covers this nomination, no further activity will be undertaken on this topic.
 - Smith SM, Schroeder K, Fahey T. Over-the-counter medications for acute cough in children and adults in ambulatory settings. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2008, Issue 1. Art. No.: CD001831. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD001831.pub3.

Topic Description

- Nominator:** National non-governmental advisory group
- Nomination Summary:** The nominator is interested in the comparative effectiveness of over-the-counter (OTC) cold medications for the treatment of cough and cold symptoms.
- Key Questions from Nominator:** None

Considerations

- The topic meets EHC Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- This topic was found to be addressed by an existing systematic review by the Cochrane Collaboration titled *Over-the-counter medications for acute cough in children and adults in ambulatory settings*. The main objective of this review was to assess the effects of oral OTC preparations for acute cough (less than three weeks' duration) in children and adults in ambulatory settings. Because many different groups of OTC medicines are available, the authors aimed to make comparisons only within groups of preparations with a similar mode of action or other similar features. The review included non-prescription oral OTC medicines for cough, classified according to their mode of action, including antitussives, expectorants, mucolytics, antihistamine-decongestant combinations, other drug combinations using different ingredients, and antihistamines.