**2019 OTC/Rx Drug-Impaired Driving**

**SAMPLE TALKING POINTS AND FACT SHEET**

**Use of Over-the-Counter and Prescription Drugs Can Impair Driving**

***There’s More Than One Way to Be Under the Influence***

### Impaired driving is one of the most significant dangers on our roadways. Not only does it endanger drivers and their passengers, but also other vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. Impaired driving is generally associated with alcohol, prescription drug abuse, or illegal drug use. However, many legally obtained and commonly used over-the-counter and prescription drugs can affect a user’s ability to drive safely. Cold and allergy medicines, antidepressants, opioids and sleep aids can cause side effects, including drowsiness, nausea, and blurred vision, all of which can put motorists at risk. [State/Local Law Enforcement Organization] wants to help raise awareness of the risks associated with getting behind the wheel after taking OTC and prescription drugs. Learn the facts.

### Sobering Facts

* Some prescription drugs can induce drowsiness, cause nausea, affect judgement, and lessen coordination, all of which can prove fatal when driving.
* Over-the-counter drugs may cause drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, irregular heartbeat or shakiness. Users should use caution to avoid operating heavy machinery, including motor vehicles, when taking these drugs.
* Prescription drugs such as opioids, sedatives, muscle relaxants and some antidepressants have been associated with increased crash risk.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Some medications may not impair you on their own, but if taken with a second medication or with alcohol, they may cause impairment.
* Driving while impaired by any substance is illegal in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
* Violating state DUI laws that make it illegal to drive impaired by any substance— including prescription drugs, OTC medications, illegal drugs and alcohol—can result in arrest.

### Safety Tips for Driving

* Think twice before getting behind the wheel while using OTC or prescription drugs.
* Don’t let friends get behind the wheel if they are impaired by any substance.
* Always wear your seat belt—it’s your best defense against impaired drivers.

For more information, visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/).

1. Institute for Safe Medication Practices [↑](#footnote-ref-1)