

Benzodiazepine Misuse



What are Benzodiazepines?

Benzodiazepines are a group of medications whose frequent use is for the treatment of anxiety disorders. They are sometimes used to relieve painful muscle spasms, treat seizures and relieve symptoms of alcohol withdrawal. Examples of Benzodiazepine medications include Valium (Diazepam), Xanax (Alprazolam), Ativan (Lorazepam), Klonopin (Clonazepam), Librium (Chlordiazepoxide), Tranxene (Clorazepate), Serax (Oxazepam), and others.

What are some potential problems with Benzodiazepines?

Although these medications are very effective in helping one relax when anxious or distraught, they may also become the source of both emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction). Some emotional conditions require chronic use of a Benzodiazepine medication; however, most do not. Your doctor or nurse will discuss with you in detail the risks of emotional and/or physical dependence, addiction, and others risk factors as well as the anticipated benefits of Benzodiazepine medication use. They will also monitor your commitment to and progress toward achieving your overall treatment goals. It is important for you to learn new ways of maturing through life's problems and anxieties and not simply substituting a medication for the work that needs to be done developing new skills.

What are some of the potential signs and symptoms of Benzodiazepine Misuse?

Have you ever taken more Benzodiazepine medication than you were prescribed?

Have you ever gone to work or school in an "overmedicated" condition?

Have family or friends ever commented or expressed concern about your Benzodiazepine medication use?

Have you ever felt defensive toward your family or friends expressed concerns?

Do you conceal (hide) the "full" truth of your Benzodiazepine medication use from your family, friends, therapist, doctor, or nurse?

Have you ever stopped or cut back on your Benzodiazepine medication use because you felt it was causing problems in your life?

Have you ever experienced guilt because of taking a Benzodiazepine medication?

Have you ever consumed alcohol while taking a Benzodiazepine medication?

Do you believe that you cannot be addicted to a Benzodiazepine medication because it is a prescribed medication?

If you answered yes to any of these questions you should bring this to the attention of your doctor or nurse so that they can discuss this matter with you.