

- There is a greater chance that you may become dependent on Benzodiazepines if you take it for more than four weeks.
- When you are dependent on Benzodiazepines, you may experience withdrawal symptoms if you stop taking the medication suddenly. These include: anxiety, agitation, confusion, poor concentration, sweating, inability to sleep (insomnia), headache, tremor, muscle spasms and being over-sensitive to light, sound and touch.
- If you have been taking a Benzodiazepine for more than a month and want to stop taking it, it is best to discuss with your doctor. In some instances, you may be referred to a national program to help manage dependence on such medication.
- To prevent withdrawal symptoms as much as possible, it is often best to reduce the dose of the medication gradually over a number of weeks before stopping it completely. Your doctor will advise you on the dosages and frequency.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- Benzodiazepines have been associated with falls and traumatic injury. Extreme caution should be taken if you are at risk of these events (especially the elderly).
- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication due to possible harm to the foetus.

How do I Store Benzodiazepines?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Benzodiazepines



- Benzodiazepines are a group of medicines used to reduce symptoms of anxiety or panic, improve sleep in the short term, or as a muscle relaxant.
- It may also be used by the medical team to control symptoms of alcohol withdrawal. Alcohol withdrawal refers to the physical effects experienced when a person who is physically dependent on alcohol stops drinking.
- Medications in this group include Alprazolam, Bromazepam, Lorazepam, Clonazepam and Diazepam. Such medications are Controlled Drugs and can only be obtained via prescription from your doctor, and must not be obtained from other means.

How are Benzodiazepines Administered / Taken?

- Benzodiazepines must be taken only as prescribed by your doctor. Sometimes you may be asked to take the medication only when necessary. For example, Benzodiazepines could be administered to relieve specific symptoms such as rising anxiety or difficulty falling asleep when other means of management have proven ineffective.
- If you feel that the medication is no longer effective, consult your doctor.
- Do not exceed the daily prescribed dose, even if you have missed a previous dose of the medication.

Can Benzodiazepines be Administered / Taken With Other Medications?

- Benzodiazepines can interact with other medications. Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including supplements, traditional or herbal remedies.
- Avoid alcohol while taking Benzodiazepines as this can significantly increase drowsiness or dizziness caused by the Benzodiazepines.
- Avoid Grapefruit juice as it can interact with Benzodiazepines.

What are the Important Side Effects of Benzodiazepines?

- Side effects can occur with any medication use. However, these side effects are reduced when the medication are taken according to your doctor's instructions.
- If you experience any drug allergy symptoms such as rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath, please seek medical attention immediately.
- Contact your doctor if side effects persist or are severe.

Side Effect	Management
COMMON Side Effects	
Drowsiness, dizziness, fatigue, unsteadiness, muscle weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive or operate machinery. • Inform your doctor if you are at risk of falls.
Nausea or vomiting, constipation, changes in appetite, salivation changes, incontinence or difficulty in urination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor if these symptoms persist or are causing great pain or discomfort.
Poor memory, behavioural changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor if these symptoms occur.
RARE Side Effects	
Slurred speech, blurred vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor if these symptoms occur.
Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eye whites)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately if these symptoms occur.

Can Benzodiazepines Cause Dependence?

- Benzodiazepines can cause dependence (requiring the person to continue taking beyond effective doses, for longer than intended, and even after their condition has been adequately treated).