

Benzodiazepines Addiction & Treatment

Benzodiazepines are often used therapeutically to produce sedation, induce sleep, relieve anxiety and muscle spasms, and to prevent seizures. Benzodiazepines act as hypnotics in high doses, anxiolytics in moderate doses, and sedatives in low doses. Benzodiazepines effect the central nervous system functions and are classified as depressants. They are more commonly referred to as "benzos" or "benzies" and are ingestible in pill form or injected.

Benzodiazepines can be found in many medications, including, but not limited to:

Xanax (alprazolam), Valium (diazepam), Librium (chlordiazepoxide), Tranxene (clorazepate), Paxipam (Halazepam), Centrax (prazepam), Klonopin/Clonopin (Clonazepam), Serax (oxazepam), Restoril (temazepam), ProSom (estazolam), Dalmane (flurazepam)

*Rohypnol (Flunitrazepam) is a benzodiazepine not manufactured or legally marketed in the United States; however it is often smuggled in by traffickers. This drug is often referred to as a "roofie" and is known as both a "party drug" and a "date rape" drug. It often is found to be popular among younger users.

Effects of Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepine use can lead to amnesia, hostility, irritability, vivid or disturbing dreams, as well as tolerance and physical dependence. Use with alcohol or another depressant can lead to death, and often benzodiazepine abuse is particularly high among heroin and cocaine abusers.

Lasting/Long-Term Effects

Benzodiazepines target the emotional response system (limbic) of the brain, rather than the entire central nervous system. This leads to fewer long term effects than other drugs; however continued use can lead to physical and psychological dependence as well as addiction. Due to a tolerance developed to benzodiazepines, users must increase their doses in order to achieve the desired effects. Over an extended period of time, users find themselves unable to sleep without the aid of benzodiazepines.