

Patron: The Right Hon. Baroness Corston



Battle Against Tranquillisers

Lessening the harm caused by benzodiazepine tranquillisers and sleeping pills and 'Z' drugs

**HARM REDUCTION
MAKING YOUR BENZO USE
SAFER**

UK Registered Charity No: 1056508

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***HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT
BENZODIAZEPINES (BENZOS) AND THE 'Z'
DRUGS?***

Also known as:

- Benzos
- Diazzies
- Vallies
- Temazzies
- Blues
- Zops
- Moggies etc.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- Withdrawals from Benzos last longer than with any other drug?
- Withdrawal symptoms are sometimes mistaken for a mental health disorder?
- If different amounts of benzos are used each day, you will be in withdrawal, even though you haven't made a reduction?

***WHAT ARE THE WITHDRAWALS FROM
BENZOS?***

- Feeling afraid, anxious and panicky
- Agoraphobia (not wanting to go out) and claustrophobia (not wanting to stay in)
- Depression

- Not sleeping
 - Anger
 - Difficulty in concentrating
 - Feeling unreal
 - No confidence
 - Muscle pain
 - Rashes
 - Giddiness
 - Jaw pain
 - Blurred vision
 - Flu-like symptoms
 - Exhaustion
 - Over sensitivity to sound, light, touch and taste etc:
- It is dangerous to stop using benzos suddenly. This can cause seizures and suicidal feelings.**

***DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DANGERS OF
INJECTING BENZOS?***

- 'Temazepam, when injected, can cause severe problems. It is highly irritant to the veins and people become very reckless in their behaviour.' (The Safer Injecting Briefing)
- Injecting benzos which are intended to be swallowed in tablet/capsule form can cause severe vein and tissue damage, leading to ulcers;

- Injecting can cause organ damage or stroke.
- Gangrene, leading to possible limb loss, is particularly linked to benzo injecting.
- 'The injecting of benzodiazepines is associated with more HIV risk-taking.' (Darke, Hall et al 1992)
- Needle sharing leads to increased risk of infections such as HIV and Hep C & B; blood poisoning (septicaemia); and skin abscesses.

- Risk-taking behaviour (sharing needles, unsafe sex, unwise relationships)
- Sometimes people who use benzos, particularly binge-taking, take risks for the thrill. ('I wanted to see what would happen if I walked out into the road without looking. I used to get onto trains without a ticket, just to see if I could get away without paying.')

- (Benzodiazepines and Cocaine as Risk Factors in Fatal Opioid Overdose: National Treatment Agency April 2007)

BUT

- Don't stop using benzos suddenly! This is dangerous and could result in seizures and suicidal feelings, as well as lots of other unpleasant symptoms.

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE LINK BETWEEN BENZOS AND RISKY BEHAVIOUR?

- Using benzos clouds your thinking and affects your behaviour and decision-making skills. This makes it much more difficult to tell the difference between sensible and risky choices and can result in:
- Shoplifting ('I felt I was invisible')
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unstable behaviour (frequently misdiagnosed as Borderline Personality Disorder)
- Memory loss ('people were telling me about things I had done, but I couldn't remember doing any of it')

IS THERE A BIGGER OVERDOSE RISK WITH BENZOS?

- Most fatal overdoses happen as a result of taking a mixture of heroin, alcohol and benzos. This is because all three suppress your breathing. Taking a mixture of any of these substances can make breathing difficult, which increases your chance of fatal overdose considerably.
- Did you know that...?
- 'With recent benzo use the risk of fatal heroin overdose is 2.4 times greater than those with no evidence of use'
- 'If methadone is also being used, the risk is 10 times bigger'

NEED MORE INFORMATION?
CONTACT BAT

Peer Support Line:
0117 9663629
Call charges set by your phone network)