

Depressants

Benzodiazepines

(Xanax)

Xans, Bars, Ladders, Zannies

What is it?

Benzodiazepines are prescription medications, usually used short-term for sleep or anxiety. Xanax has become the most well known and comes in various pill forms. Ativan and Valium are also commonly prescribed benzos. Rohypnol, the date rape drug, is also a benzodiazepine.

Why do people use it?

- ◆ As prescribed, to reduce anxiety and/or improve sleep.
- ◆ Socially, for fun or to cope with stress/social anxiety/uncomfortable feelings.
- ◆ To “drug” someone else

What can go wrong?

- ◆ Mixing benzos with other substances, especially other depressants, can result in unconsciousness, coma, or death.
- ◆ Unconsciousness and memory loss after taking benzos, and seizures during withdrawal, are common.
- ◆ Non-prescription Xanax is often made in illegal labs and may be contaminated with Fentanyl or other substances.

How does it work?

Benzos are absorbed through the bloodstream and travel to the brain. When there, they affect naturally occurring chemicals that regulate mood, energy and the way you experience the world. Some people may feel happy and relaxed, and others may feel anxious.

Information adapted from heretohelp.bc.ca, camh.ca, & towardtheheart.com

For more information visit their websites.

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Harm Reduction

1. If you have a prescription for a benzo, take it **EXACTLY** as directed by your doctor.
2. Avoid mixing Benzos with other substances, especially alcohol. Mixing depressants can slow your heart rate and your breathing to unsafe levels. Stimulants can mask the effects resulting in taking dangerous amounts.
3. If buying benzos from friends or dealers be aware that pills may be fake and contaminated with Fentanyl or other substances.
4. Use with trusted people in familiar spaces. Using alone means no one can help you if something goes wrong.

What to look for:

1. Difficult to breathe or not breathing
2. Dizziness, disorientation or confusion
3. Blue tinted fingers nails or lips
4. Tremors or seizures
5. Muscle weakness, uncontrolled movements or unconsciousness

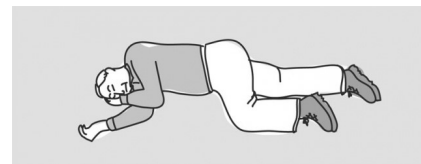
Overdose

What to do:

CALL 9-1-1

Remain calm and stay with the person until help arrives.

If you have to leave the person unattended, put them in the recovery position, as below.



Discovery Youth & Family Substance Use Services

Victoria/South Island: 250-519-5313

Cowichan Valley: 250-737-2029

Nanaimo/Ladysmith: 250-739-5790

Oceanside area: 250-947-8215

Mt Waddington area: 250-902-6063

