

WHEN INJECTING

- Use your own, new & sterile injecting equipment, (inc. water). Where it isn't possible to get sterile water, use filtered or cooled down boiled kettle water. Bottled water is NOT sterile!
- AVOID sharing any of your equipment, (water, spoon, filters, etc), not just needles
- Wash your hands AND injecting site thoroughly before & after with soap & water or a fresh alcohol swab
- Wipe down the mixing up area with a fresh swab or if available, warm soapy water
- Avoid vein damage by rotating injection sites
- Keep hydrated & warm up your body to make veins more visible.
- **Dispose of syringes & equipment responsibly.** Look for this NSP symbol for disposal sites

DRUG COMBINATIONS

** Polydrug use has many possible outcomes. What could be fun for one person could be dangerous for another. We recommend you proceed with caution.*

DAINGEROUS

Opioids, alcohol, ketamine, GHB or other depressants – Can cause overdose, loss of consciousness and difficulty breathing leading to respiratory failure and possible death.

CAUTION

Stimulants (MDMA, Cocaine, etc) – benzos will partially mask the effects of any stimulants. Although you don't feel the effects as much, the drugs will still be active in your system and can still cause side effects.

Psychedelics - can counter the effects of psychedelic substances.

Antipsychotics - can cause excessive sedation, production of saliva and ataxia, (impaired body control).

Antihistamines - possible excess sedation.

Taking Benzos can be particularly dangerous if you have or are at risk of:

• Liver problems, Sleep apnea syndrome, Severe breathing problems, Myasthenia, Narrow angle glaucoma

DRUG TESTS & ROADSIDE TESTS

Roadside Police: Benzodiazepines are not tested for in roadside drug tests, however always follow your prescribing doctor's instructions regarding driving. Any driver may be subject to a roadside behavioural impairment test.

Workplace: OHS law gives employers rights to test employees for drug use. This should be contained in workplace policy, it should be reasonable, & a risk assessment should be done to determine whether testing of employees is appropriate.

'Pill Testing'/Drug Checking: Although the pharmaceutical market is regulated & pills are made to a very high standard, when sourcing from a dealer you may encounter **counterfeit pills**, (that may look like the real ones), that contain unknown substances at unknown doses with unknown side effects. Lab-quality testing has been trialed in Australia but is not yet available as a health service outside the ACT.

MORE INFO:

This educational resource has been developed by people who use drugs for their peers and the wider community. The role of DanceWize is to provide practical, evidence-based, unbiased information to assist you to make educated choices and to promote harm reduction, community care, and wellbeing. In an unregulated market it's impossible to know the purity or dose of any substance. Taking drugs from an unregulated market carries its own risk, and you can educate yourself and practice harm reduction to reduce this risk.

Knowledge is power.

OTHER HELPFUL PEER BASED WEBSITES

AUSTRALIA

www.dancewize.org.au
www.dancewizensw.org.au
www.hi-ground.org
www.prism.org.au,
www.consciousnest.info

INTERNATIONAL

www.erowid.org
www.tripsit.me
www.dancesafe.org
www.tripproject.ca
<https://www.kosmicare.org/>
www.pillreports.com

Research your jurisdiction's Department of Health website for drug 'alerts' or 'warnings'. Both HRVic & DanceWize post these Drug Alerts on our socials.



'Benzos'

BENZODIAZEPINES

STREET NAMES

Benzos, tamaz, vals, vallies, xans, zans, normies pills, tranx, sleepers, moggies, serras, normies

CHEMICAL COMPOUND

Alprazolam (Xanax®), Diazepam (Valium®), Temazepam (Temaze® or Normison®), Lorazepam (Ativan®), clonazepam (Klonopin®), oxazepam (Serax or Serapax®), nitrazepam (Mogodon®), lurasepam (Dalmane®), lunitrazepam (Rohypnol®)

KNOW YOUR BODY & MIND - 'SET'
KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT - 'SETTING'
KNOW YOUR DRUG - 'PRACTISE HARM REDUCTION'

SAY 'KNOW' TO DRUGS.

DESCRIPTION

Benzodiazepine (pronounced *ben-zoh-die-AZ-apeen*) or 'Benzos' for short- are a group of drugs with depressant effects, commonly prescribed by doctors as medication to relieve stress, anxiety, and assist with problems sleeping or to help with the withdrawal effects of other depressants (alcohol, opioids). Being a 'depressant' type drug means that it slows down the activity of the central nervous system making your body and mind more relaxed.

Benzodiazepines are sometimes used for 'fun' or recreational purposes. Sometimes they are used to counter the effects of certain stimulating or psychedelic drugs.

Benzodiazepine is the name of the drug group.

There are three types of benzos;

Long, Medium and Short acting.

As a general rule, short-acting benzos have stronger withdrawal or 'come down' effects and can be more addictive than long-acting ones. Benzodiazepines are usually known by their brand name ie. Xanax® or Valium® but can sometimes be known by their chemical name.

DRUG	TYPE	BRAND NAME
diazepam	Long	Valium® or Antenex®
alprazolam	Short	Xanax® or Kalma®
temazepam	Short	Temaze® or Normison®
lorazepam	Medium	Ativan®
clonazepam	Medium	Klonopin®
oxazepam	Short	Serax® or Serapax®
nitrazepam	Medium	Mogodon®
flurazepam	Long	Dalmane®
flunitrazepam	Long	Rohypnol®

ADMINISTRATION (MOST COMMON ROUTES)

Most commonly swallowed, but in some cases is snorted, shelved or injected (either intravenously or intramuscularly).

EXAMPLE OF STANDARD DOSES

**Dosage will vary from person to person - always research your drugs from a reliable source.*

Alprazolam (Xanax®) – 0.5-1mg daily

Diazepam (Valium®) - 2-5mg, 2-3 times per day

Temazepam (Temaze®) - 7.5mg-30mg daily

Lorazepam (Ativan®)- 1-3mg, 2-3 times per day

HALF LIFE (the time it takes for the amount of a drug's active substance in your body to reduce by half.)

Many benzos have an incredibly long half life.

Even though it feels like the effects may wear off after a few hours, **the drug is still active in your system for up to 1-3 days after you have taken it.** *Remember this if using other substances or redosing.

EFFECTS

= 'Set' (your mind & body) + 'Setting' (environment) + Drug

KEY: 🍊 LESS COMMON 🍒 RARE

PHYSICAL

- Muscle relaxation
- Sleepiness
- Slowed breathing rate & heart rate
- Decreased body temperature
- Decreased motor skills & lack of coordination
- Increased clumsiness
- Slurring of speech or stuttering
- Dry mouth 🍊
- Nausea & vomiting 🍊
- Headache 🍊
- Seeing double or blurry eyesight 🍊
- Physical dependence 🍊
- Tremors (shakiness)
- Vertigo 🍒
- Unconsciousness 🍒
- Constipation 🍊
- Hypotension or hypertension 🍒
- Risk of suffocation due to unconsciousness 🍒

EMOTIONAL

- Euphoria
- Decrease of tension, anxiety, sadness, panic
- Relaxation
- Increased confidence and aloofness
- Feelings of isolation 🍊

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Reduced social inhibitions
- Decreased concentration

- Confusion
- Impaired or slowed thinking & response 🍊
- Reckless behaviour 🍊
- Agitation -especially the days after taking

LONG TERM EFFECTS

Long term use runs the risk of physical dependence. Physical tolerance can happen quickly with benzos, sometimes causing a dependence within a couple of days.

Withdrawal side effects from benzodiazepines can be extreme, & even fatal. Withdrawal should ideally be managed in a hospital setting. If not available please do your research before ever trying to go 'cold turkey'.

SAFER USING

- Try to **use in comfortable environments with people you trust** to look out for you if you overdo it
- Avoid eating prior or wait at least 30mins after eating
- **Dosage can vary greatly between different types of benzos & between different people. Do your own research on what might be a safe dosage for you personally.**
- A single pill will generally contain a dose within the effective therapeutic range.

WHEN INGESTING or SWALLOWING

- Follow the directions on packaging if available – it might be something else if it's not in the sealed pharmaceutical packaging.

WHEN SNORTING

- Crush into fine powder (crystals can cause little cuts)
- Snort water before & after to protect your nose
- Use your own straw/spoon, (& *not bank notes*) to avoid infection or blood borne virus transmission (HIV/ HepC).
- Repeated snorting can damage your nose, switch nostrils regularly and take breaks.

WHEN SHELVEING (DRY) or PLUGGING (WET MIX)

- Use lubrication to avoid tearing the skin
- Use a condom or latex/vinyl gloves to avoid scratches
- Wash your hands thoroughly before & after
- Use sterile water to mix with powdered pills