

Benzodiazepines

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Do you know of a person using Benzo's? However, they declined a referral for support? Here is some helpful information. Please approach conversations with respect and no judgement.



Questions to ask

How are you using it?

Pills can be swallowed, crushed and sniffed, or combined with other substances. Each method carries specific risks, such as nasal damage or increased likelihood of overdose.

What type of benzodiazepine are you using?

Prescription medications (e.g., Xanax, Valium) may differ in strength and duration from illicitly obtained ones (street benzos), which could be counterfeit and more dangerous. You cannot normally be sure of the purity unless you have been prescribed the drug.

Are you mixing benzos with other substances?

Combining with alcohol, benzos, or other depressants increases overdose risk. Using these categories of substances together is known as the 'Toxic Trio' as it will put you at a much greater risk of fatality.

Impact on Health



Overdose risk

Alcohol and benzos depress the central nervous system, which affects your breathing. This means that using benzos with or without alcohol increases the risk of overdose and death.



Mental Health Concerns

Worsening anxiety or mental health issues when the drug is misused or withdrawn suddenly.



Withdrawal Symptoms

Bad withdrawal symptoms, which can include tremors, nausea, vomiting, headaches, anxiety, panic attacks and depression



Memory Problems

Benzos have been shown to cause short-term memory loss and big doses can make a user forgetful and overly sleepy.

Harm Reduction



Try a small amount (half a pill) first and wait at least an hour to see what the effect is before considering taking any more



Have a sober sitter or someone not using substances



Be extra cautious about the sources from which you get your drugs, and about the drugs you take



Avoid mixing with alcohol or other depressants as it increases the risk of overdose



Go low and slow if you haven't used in a while. (Low doses, take breaks)

Reducing

If you become dependent on Benzos, stopping using them can be unpleasant. You can get withdrawal symptoms including anxiety, feeling sick, dizziness and headaches.

If you notice withdrawal symptoms when you are not taking benzodiazepines, please do not stop taking them suddenly. Get in touch with your local treatment service and speak to a doctor about safely reducing your use and stopping.