

TRANQUILIZERS



Facts About Drugs

WHAT THEY ARE

Names: tranks, downers, antianxiety agents (anxiolytics), happy pills, BZDs, mood modifiers, mood elevators

Type: Benzodiazepines I: Alprazolam (Xanax), chlorazepate (Tranxene), chlordiazepoxide (Librium, Novopoxide), diazepam (E.Pam, Valium, Vivil), lorazepam (Ativan), oxazepam (Serax), Vs (Valium) **Benzodiazepines II:**

flurazepam (Dalmane, Novoflupam, Somnol), nitrazepam (Mogadon), temazepam (Restoril), triazolam (Halcion)

Meprobamate: Equanil, Meprospan-400, Miltown.

Forms: Benzodiazepines I—white, creamy or yellow powder, crystalline or fine; Benzodiazepines II—white or yellow crystalline powder; Meprobamate—white powder; soluble in varying degrees with water and/or alcohol.

Combinations: Librax (chlordiazepoxide, cimetidine bromide) for peptic ulcer, 217 Mep (meprobamate, ASA, caffeine citrate), 282 Mep (217 Mep plus codeine phosphate); when abused, combined with other central nervous system depressants, especially alcohol and barbiturates

Usage: swallowed as capsule, tablet or liquid; injected into bloodstream as solution

Legal Status: legal as manufactured and prescribed

Other Forms: Major tranquilizers are used in managing psychiatric illness. Unlike minor tranquilizers, their effects don't mirror sedative/hypnotic drugs. Combined with alcohol and other depressants, however, side effects are intensified.

WHAT THEY FEEL LIKE

relaxation and calmness (mild euphoria with diazepam, more intense with meproba-

mate), drowsiness, fatigue, hostility, dizziness, depression, blurred and double vision, confusion, memory loss, hallucinations

WHAT THEY DO

To Your Mind: activate specific brain receptors

To Your Body: interfere with control of movements

Special Characteristics: Diazepam is often substituted for methaqualone (ludes, 714s, Quaalude) when sold on the street. Small amounts of alcohol can be lethal when interacting with benzodiazepines. Heroin addicts and recovering alcoholics use Diazepam to achieve mild intoxication. Benzodiazepines can alleviate some side effects of withdrawal from other drug abuse.

HOW THEY CAN HURT YOU

- lack of coordination
- altered speech, confusion, coma
- withdrawal effects: tremors, altered speech, rapid heart rate, blood pressure drop, headache
- mood swings, tension, nightmares
- loss of sexual function, apathy
- death from overdose

WHEN TO GET HELP

- Do you find it hard to cope without a pill?
- Is your work or school performance affected by your drug use?
- Are you having problems with family and friends?
- Do you use a variety of drugs?

FACT: Tranquilizers are the most widely prescribed psychotherapeutic agents in the world, and are most involved in suicide attempts and accidental overdoses.