

Benzodiazepine: harm minimisation strategies

Measure and track your dose

A single pill generally contains a dose that's going to be effective. If you're unsure of the strength, start with half or a quarter of a pill to test the effects. An effective dose can vary from person to person.

Avoid re-dosing too quickly: benzos can stay active in your system for a long period (24 hours or more) even if you stop feeling the effects. This makes re-dosing riskier.

Avoid using daily: use less often, and consider taking breaks to prevent building tolerance or dependence.

Set and setting

Your mindset (set) and environment (setting) can strongly influence how benzos will affect you. Both can influence how relaxing or risky the experience is and whether you feel calm, sedated, or disconnected.

Set = your body and mind

Benzos can amplify your current state in a numbing, slowing way. If you're anxious or unwell, they may increase disconnection. Using them to avoid emotions can also worsen rebound anxiety as they wear off. Being well-rested, fed, and hydrated can help reduce risks.

Setting = your surroundings

Benzos slow your coordination and response time, so it's safest to use in a quiet, familiar space with minimal demands on your attention.

Mixing and masking

Mixing: avoid mixing benzos with alcohol, opioids, GHB, and other depressants. These combinations increase the risk of breathing problems and overdose.

Masking: mixing a depressant and a stimulant can 'mask' the effects of each drug and make your body feel like it's not under much strain. Different drugs can also wear off faster than others, so if this happens you might overdose.



Contact us for support

If you're struggling with alcohol or other drugs, we're here for you.

We offer a variety of community and residential programs throughout Queensland and New South Wales, helping thousands of people every year to navigate alcohol and drug challenges and move forward in life.

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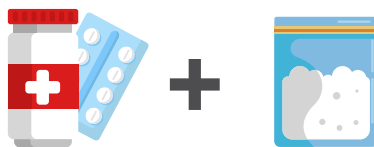
Risky mixes with benzos

Benzos and alcohol



Risks: mixing these increases the effects of each substance, leading to increased risk of breathing problems and overdose.

Benzos and stimulants



Risks: mixing these masks the effects of each, leading to risky behaviours and using too much. If the stimulant wears off before the benzos, you could overdose even without taking more pills.

Benzos and opioids, GHB or ketamine



Risks: mixing these increases the effects of each substance, leading to increased risk of breathing problems and overdose.

Remember:

The effects of any substance can vary based on individual factors, environment, tolerance, and purity.

No dose is completely without risk. When possible, start low and go slow, avoid using alone, and take steps to care for yourself and others.