

Facts About:

Tranquilizers

What are tranquilizers and sleeping pills?

These drugs belong to a larger group of substances known as the sedative–hypnotics, which slow down or "sedate" the central nervous system (the brain, and spinal cord). This affects thinking, feeling, and body movement and function. Alcohol is a sedative, although we don't often think of it that way. Diazepam (Valium®) is one example of a tranquilizer.

In large doses, tranquilizers can make you sleep or become unconscious, just like sleeping pills can. In normal doses, tranquilizers make you feel calm, and they are prescribed to treat anxiety. Some tranquilizers and sleeping pills have been linked to "date rape." If you need to take tranquilizers or sleeping pills, use them for a short time only. In the long term, there are better ways to deal with stress and sleeplessness. Some of these are: exercise, biofeedback, relaxation techniques and counseling.

Short-term Effects

The short-term effects of tranquilizers and sleeping pills include relaxation, drowsiness, reduced tension and feelings of wellbeing. It is dangerous to drive a vehicle while using these drugs. Never combine these drugs with alcohol. The depressant effects of alcohol are added on to the depressant effects of the tranquilizers or sleeping pills. You may have trouble breathing, and may go into a coma or die.

Long-term Effects

With long-term use, you may have problems with memory and judgment. Your muscles may get weak, and you can become confused and disoriented. If a pregnant woman takes sleeping pills and tranquilizers, they will enter the blood of the developing fetus. There is a higher risk that the fetus will have birth defects such as a cleft palate. Always check with a doctor before you take drugs during pregnancy.

Tranquilizers, Sleeping Pills and Addiction

Tolerance is the body adapting to the presence of a drug. When tolerance to a drug increases, more of the drug is necessary to achieve the same effect. Users of tranquilizers and sleeping pills soon develop tolerance to the calming effects of these drugs. In contrast, there is usually no tolerance to the harmful effects: more drug produces more harm. When tolerance builds, it is dangerous to continue using the drug. If you have developed tolerance to the tranquilizers or sleeping pills, talk to your doctor before you quit taking the drugs. Withdrawal symptoms may include nausea, anxiety, increased heart rate, abdominal cramps, tremors or even seizures.

The choice is yours – choose to live free from addictions!