



Diazepam, Nordiazepam, Temazepam, and Oxazepam - General Effects

Diazepam (Valium) is a benzodiazepine and central nervous system (CNS) depressant.

- 1. Diazepam is prescribed as a sedative, and to manage anxiety and seizure disorders.
a. Diazepam has a half-life of 21-37 hours.
b. Diazepam has a general therapeutic range, but experienced effects can vary based on an individual's prescription history.
i. Therapeutic range refers to the blood concentration expected to achieve the desired therapeutic effects.
2. Nordiazepam can be prescribed to manage anxiety and is a major active metabolite of diazepam and other benzodiazepines.
a. Nordiazepam has a half-life of 31-97 hours.
b. Nordiazepam has a general therapeutic range, but experience effects can vary based on an individual's prescription history.
3. Temazepam is an active metabolite of diazepam. Temazepam can be prescribed on its own as Restoril to treat insomnia.
a. Temazepam has a half-life of 3-13 hours.
b. Temazepam has a general therapeutic range, but experienced effects can vary based on an individual's prescription history.
4. Oxazepam is an active metabolite of nordiazepam, temazepam, and other benzodiazepines. Oxazepam can be prescribed on its own as Serax to treat anxiety.
a. Oxazepam has a half-life of 4-16 hours.
b. Oxazepam has a general therapeutic range, but experienced effects can vary based on an individual's prescription history.
5. General effects of benzodiazepines include but are not limited to drowsiness, sedation, confusion, memory impairment, blurred vision, depressed heart rate, incoordination, difficulty maintaining balance, and respiratory depression.
a. General impairing effects of benzodiazepines on driving include, but are not limited to impaired divided attention, inability to maintain lane position, poor coordination, delayed reaction time, difficulty following directions, falling asleep at the wheel, reduced vigilance, cognitive impairment, poor perception, slow driving, confusion, disorientation, and inattentiveness.
6. The longer an individual uses a drug, the more they can build up a tolerance to its effects.
7. Drug metabolism (alcohol excluded) exhibits first order kinetics, or the elimination of a constant fraction of drug quantity per unit of time.
8. The use of more than one drug at a time may enhance the effects the drugs would otherwise have on their own, leading to greater impairment.

References

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Wisconsin Department of Justice

Diazepam, Nordiazepam, Oxazepam and Temazepam Monograph

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** The interpretive information provided is not exhaustive nor meant to encompass all scenarios where toxicological results are reported. Interpretive information is meant to serve as a general guide for the reader and that for any given case, consultation with a forensic toxicologist is recommended. **

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