Your benzodiazepine may not be helping as much as you think!

Many people who take benzodiazepines can get used to the medication. This means that the benzodiazepine is not helping and when a dose is skipped or lowered, anxiety and sleep problems can get worse. Some people have a hard time coming off these medications. Your provider will work with you to help with the tapering process.

**Possible Risks of Benzodiazepines:**
- Memory problems
- Mood problems
- Feeling tired or drowsy
- Falls and accidents
- Overdose or addiction

**Did you know??**
The deaths of Heath Ledger, Amy Winehouse, Michael Jackson, and Elvis Presley involved benzodiazepines.

**How will you feel while reducing or stopping your benzodiazepine?**

You may have more anxiety or insomnia or other withdrawal symptoms when you first start. These only last for a short period of time. Not everyone will get these symptoms. By working with your provider to slowly lower your benzodiazepine, withdrawal symptoms can be less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Signs of Benzodiazepine Withdrawal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Symptoms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trouble sleeping/nightmares</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Anxiety/irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Changes in mood</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Muscle stiffness</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Rare Symptoms**
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't really there
- Seizures
Helpful tips to getting off your benzodiazepine successfully

Know that withdrawal is only temporary – these feelings will go away

- Work closely with your provider and report symptoms of withdrawal
- Stopping benzodiazepines may improve sleep and anxiety. If your sleep or anxiety remain a problem, ask your primary care or mental health clinician for help
- Ask for support from friends and family
- Wellness – meditation, prayer, exercise
- Sit in a quiet place with eyes closed and focus on breathing air in and out
- Use good sleep habits
- Avoid large amounts of caffeine

**Do not stop taking any medications without first speaking to your provider**

Tapering Schedule:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Please call ______________ with any questions or concerns.

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Text - 838255