

# Slowly Stopping Benzodiazepines

## Helpful Tips to Getting Off Your Benzodiazepine Successfully

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

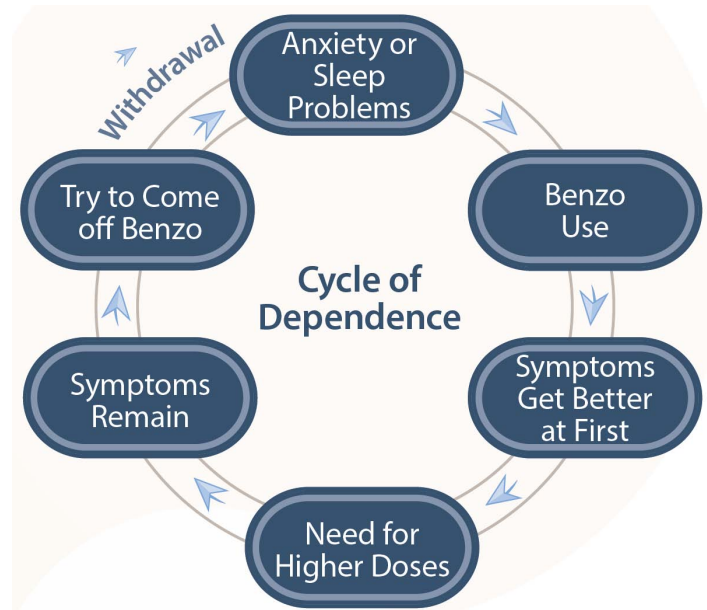
Many people who take benzodiazepines can get used to the medication. This means that the benzodiazepine is not helping and when a dose is skipped or lowered, anxiety and sleep problems can get worse. Some people have a hard time coming off these medications. Your provider will work with you to help with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

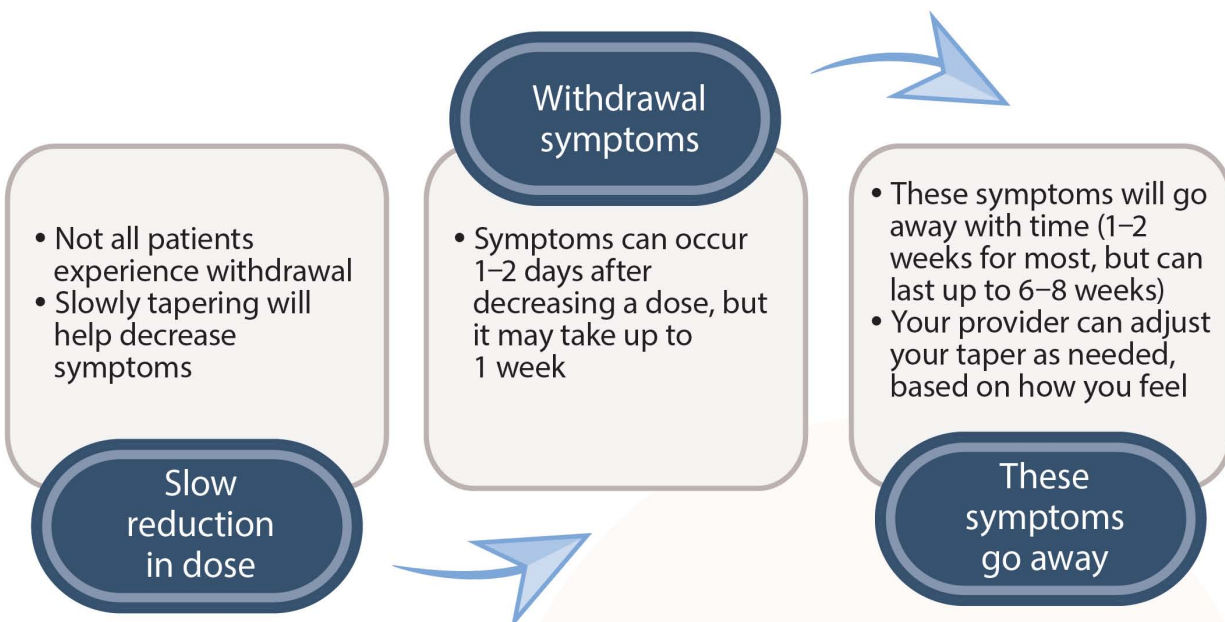


### How will you feel while reducing or stopping your benzodiazepine?

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.

| Possible Signs of Benzodiazepine Withdrawal  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Common Symptoms  |  | Less Common Symptoms   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trouble sleeping/nightmares</li> <li>• Anxiety/irritability</li> <li>• Changes in mood</li> <li>• Muscle stiffness</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flu like symptoms</li> <li>• Numbness or tingling</li> <li>• Stomach upset</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strange feeling that you aren't really in your body</li> <li>• Memory problems/Trouble thinking on your feet</li> </ul> |
| <b>Rare Symptoms</b>   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeing or hearing things that aren't really there</li> <li>• Seizures</li> </ul>  |  |  |

### Timeline of Withdrawal:



### 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:

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Please call \_\_\_\_\_ with any questions or concerns.