

# Drug Information Table

## Benzodiazepines – diazepam (Valium), alprazolam (Xanax)

<b>THERAPEUTIC USE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anxiety and anxiety disorders (alprazolam, diazepam)</li><li>• Skeletal muscle spasm and spasticity (diazepam)</li><li>• Seizure disorders – treats status epilepticus (diazepam)</li><li>• Acute alcohol withdrawal symptoms (diazepam)</li><li>• Induction of anesthesia (diazepam)</li></ul>
<b>ADVERSE DRUG REACTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drowsiness, slurred speech</li><li>• Impaired recall of events</li><li>• Paradoxical reaction (confusion, anxiety)</li><li>• Hypotension, tachycardia, respiratory depression</li><li>• Tolerance and physical dependence (especially with alprazolam)</li><li>• Withdrawal symptoms – insomnia, anxiety, tremors, diaphoresis, dizziness, panic, hypertension, seizures</li><li>• Overdose/toxicity</li><li>• Oral – sedation, confusion</li><li>• Parenteral – possibly life-threatening sedation, hypotension, respiratory depression, cardiac arrest</li></ul>
<b>INTERVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor clients to prevent falls and other injury following administration.</li><li>• Assess client's memory following administration.</li><li>• Monitor clients, especially older adults, for a paradoxical reaction.</li><li>• Monitor vital signs, especially with IV administration.</li><li>• Monitor clients for signs of tolerance and dependence.</li><li>• Taper over 1 to 2 weeks to prevent or minimize withdrawal.</li><li>• Monitor for signs of withdrawal.</li><li>• Reverse sedation with IV flumazenil.</li><li>• Provide airway and blood pressure support as needed for parenteral overdose.</li></ul>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give alprazolam orally.</li><li>• Take oral benzodiazepines with food if gastrointestinal symptoms develop.</li><li>• Give diazepam orally, rectally, IM, or IV.</li><li>• Administer IV diazepam slowly and have emergency resuscitation equipment nearby.</li><li>• Be aware that IV diazepam precipitates in solution with some diluents and drugs.</li><li>• Do not give the emulsion form IM (IV only).</li><li>• Avoid IM diazepam due to inconsistent absorption; if necessary, inject slowly into a large muscle.</li></ul>

<b>CLIENT INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruct clients to use care with ambulation and when driving or using hazardous equipment.</li> <li>• Advise clients that amnesia may occur.</li> <li>• Instruct clients to stop taking the drug and inform the provider if a paradoxical reaction occurs.</li> <li>• Instruct clients to avoid increasing the prescribed dose.</li> <li>• Instruct clients to change positions slowly to prevent falls.</li> <li>• Instruct clients that tolerance to benzodiazepines occurs with time.</li> <li>• Instruct clients to taper the drug slowly to prevent withdrawal symptoms.</li> <li>• Instruct clients to take the drug as prescribed and avoid the use of other depressants.</li> </ul>
<b>CONTRAINDICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pregnancy – teratogenic</li> <li>• Schedule IV controlled substances</li> <li>• Glaucoma</li> <li>• Coma, shock, neonates, labor/delivery (IV diazepam)</li> </ul>
<b>PRECAUTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older adults, children under 18 (alprazolam)</li> <li>• Renal or hepatic impairment</li> <li>• Mental health disorders, suicidal ideation, addiction risk</li> <li>• Chronic respiratory disorders</li> <li>• Neuromuscular disorders</li> </ul>
<b>INTERACTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The risk of severe sedation and respiratory depression increases when taken concurrently with other CNS depressants (alcohol, opioids, and other benzodiazepines).</li> <li>• Cimetidine (Tagamet) increases benzodiazepine levels.</li> <li>• Smoking decreases the effects of benzodiazepines.</li> <li>• Kava-kava, chamomile, and valerian increase the risk for sedation.</li> <li>• Disulfiram (Antabuse) and fluoxetine (Prozac) increase alprazolam levels.</li> </ul>