



STACEY MILLER
CONSULTANCY
Positivity and Prevention
BENZODIAZEPINES



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WHAT ARE THEY?

Benzodiazepines (also known as tranquilisers) are a group of depressant drugs that slow down the central nervous system and heart rate. Legitimately, they can be prescribed but are also sold illegally through the black market and vary greatly in strength.

HOW ARE THEY USED?

Most commonly, they are packaged in blister packs or loose in bags and come in tablet form. Less common but is still a worrying trend, is users crushing and snorting the tablet or injecting it which adds more risks in terms of catching viruses such as HIV and overdosing.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS AND RISKS?

If prescribed, they are used to alleviate specific health problems such as anxiety or insomnia and should only be used short term. This is because they are very addictive and have very unpleasant withdrawal symptoms when trying to come off them. There are several undesired effects including tremors, vomiting, panic attacks and even seizures! This can lead to a vicious cycle of taking more benzodiazepines to feel better and thus, quickly spiralling into an addiction. Its also important to note that they have contributed to the high rise of recent drug related deaths especially when being mixed with other drugs.

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

Having a prescription is legal but if misused, then it is categorised as a class C drug. This holds a penalty of a maximum of 2 years for possession and supply can amount up to 14 years in prison and an unlimited fine. The law gets confusing if the benzodiazepines are counterfeit and come under a different drugs law meaning possession is not an offence but supply carries a max of 7 years in prison with an unlimited fine.