

Educational Links (English):

- ❖ http://www.rxlist.com/sleep_disorder_medications/drugs-condition.htm
- ❖ <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientsandProviders/ucm101557.htm>
- ❖ <https://www.recoveryconnection.com/substance-abuse/medication-treatment-addictions-and-dual-diagnosis/medication-classes/sedative-hypnotic-medications/>
- ❖ <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/insomnia/in-depth/sleeping-pills/art-20043959>
- ❖ <http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/insomnia-medications#1>

Emergencies:

A high-large benzodiazepine poisoning or intake can be fatal and cause death. If you have injected a large amount of this type of medicine or if a family member of yours has done so call 9-1-1 and request an ambulance.



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Lumos Psychiatric Services



Educational Booklet: Hypnotics

Hypnotics are medications used to treat sleep disorders (insomnia). A person may have sleep problems due to stress or anxiety, pain, physical discomfort, or changes in daily routine.

Some medications may also interfere with your sleep pattern. Sleep problems usually improve once the causes are identified and treated.

Before prescribing hypnotics, your doctor may recommend different therapies such as sleep hygiene techniques, exercises and/or psychological therapy.

Before starting a hypnotic, tell your doctor if:

- ❖ Suffers from drug allergies
- ❖ Are pregnant or nursing
- ❖ Use over-the-counter or natural products
- ❖ Has seizures
- ❖ Suffers from sleep apnea

Most common hypnotic names:

Zolpidem (<i>Ambien</i>)	Ramelteon (Rozerem)
Zaleplon (<i>Sonata</i>)	Doxylamine (Unisom)
Eszopiclone (<i>Lunesta</i>)	Hydroxyzine (Vistaril)
Suvorexant (Belsomra)	Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

When taking hypnotics, the therapeutic effect (decreased symptoms) is usually during the first hour after taking the medicine. The effect is calm or sedation so it is recommended that you take it just before lying in your bed.

REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS AS INDICATED BY YOUR MEDICAL WITHOUT MAKING CHANGES IN FREQUENCY OR PRESCRIPTION DOSAGE.

Indications for the use of a hypnotic:

- ❖ Insomnia

Most common side effects of hypnotics:

- ❖ Sedation in the morning
- ❖ Fatigue or tiredness
- ❖ Dizziness
- ❖ Muscle weakness
- ❖ Problems coordinating movements or concentration - could cause predisposition to falls
- ❖ Confusion
- ❖ Lapses of memory problems or passenger forgetfulness
- ❖ Nausea the stomach acidity
- ❖ Feeling bitter in the mouth
- ❖ Paradoxical effect - Agitation, hallucinations, nightmares, euphoria or nervousness
- ❖ Rash on the skin

How long will I have to take the hypnotic?

Insomnia can go away on its own. In addition, once the cause of insomnia is treated or eliminated, sleep problems may decrease. It is recommended that hypnotics be taken for a limited time. Many patients use the drug only when they need it and not daily. It is recommended that once you have slept well for 2 to 3 nights, try to sleep without the use of the hypnotic.

Does the use of benzodiazepines create dependence or addiction?

It is not usual, but tolerance or loss of effectiveness could develop if you use the drug for more than 4 months. To avoid possible dependence on the drug it is recommended that its use be for a short period of time and not used every day.

Methods for achieving good sleep hygiene:

- ❖ Avoid eating caffeinated foods or beverages within hours before bedtime.
- ❖ Avoid eating heavy meals in the hours before bedtime.
- ❖ Stay active during the day, avoiding naps.
- ❖ Exercise regularly.
- ❖ Do relaxing activities before bed, such as reading, listening to music, or taking a hot water bath.
- ❖ Establish a routine to fall asleep and get up.
- ❖ Use your room or bed only for sleep and sexual activity.
- ❖ Avoid external stimuli that may interfere with sleep.
- ❖ Try to make your bed comfortable and make you feel comfortable in it.
- ❖ Practice relaxation techniques to decrease anxiety and promote sleep.
- ❖ Decrease the time you spend awake in bed.

General recommendations:

- ❖ See a psychiatrist for the treatment of your mental condition.
- ❖ Avoid caffeine use or cigarette use while using hypnotics.
- ❖ Avoid driving a car or operating machinery if you feel sedated or slow from thought.
- ❖ Avoid alcohol, as hypnotics increase the effect of alcohol and can make you feel more sedated or dizzy.
- ❖ When taking your medications, be aware of any side effects that may occur.
- ❖ Do not discontinue medicines without first discussing it with your doctor.
- ❖ It is imperative to supplement the use of your medications by attending psychotherapy.

For questions or concerns, discuss it with your doctor.