

10 FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MEDICATION FOR ANXIETY

1. Xanax and other benzodiazepines are considered to be the most addictive of all the anti-anxiety medications. These medications are so addictive that withdrawal symptoms can be severe enough to cause seizures.[1]
2. It can take about four hours for Xanax to leave your system and one to two weeks for withdrawal symptoms to subside.
3. Drinking alcohol when on these medications is very dangerous.[2] Some medications can double the effects of alcohol.
4. The top 5 anti-depressant and anti-anxiety medications in 2011[3] were;

Rank	Medication	Number Of Prescriptions
1	Xanax	47 Million Prescriptions
2	Celexa	37 Million Prescriptions
3	Zoloft	37 Million Prescriptions
4	Ativan	27 Million Prescriptions
5	Prozac	24 Million Prescriptions

5. According to a study done in 2008, 11% of Americans take some sort of anti-anxiety or anti-depressant medication, more than 60% of those who take this medication have taken it for over two years, and 14% have been taking these medications for more than 10 years. [4]
6. Xanax and other benzodiazepines are known to make you drowsy and are sometimes used as a sleeping aid for insomnia. They also usually contribute to some memory loss, though not severe.[1]
7. Despite their sedating properties, some people who take anti-anxiety medication experience paradoxical excitement. The most common paradoxical reactions are increased anxiety, irritability, and agitation. [9]
8. Many medications originally approved for the treatment of depression have been found to relieve symptoms of anxiety. These include certain selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs), monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs), and the newer atypical antidepressants. [9]
9. Older adults (over 65) should be cautious about taking anti-anxiety drugs since they are more sensitive to the sedating effects of anti-anxiety medication. Even small doses can cause confusion, amnesia, loss of balance, and cognitive impairment that looks like dementia. If you are pregnant or have problems with alcohol you may also have problems with anti-anxiety medication. Always give the prescribing doctor a complete medical and psychological history. [9]
10. Medication for anxiety should always be combined with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and attention to lifestyle issues including exercise, sleep patterns, and nutrition.

References

1. WebMD - <http://www.webmd.com/drugs/drug-9824-Xanax+Oral.aspx?drugid=9824&drugname=Xanax+Oral>
2. MayoClinic.com – “Why is it bad to mix antidepressants and alcohol?” <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/expert-answers/antidepressants-and-alcohol/faq-20058231>
3. PsychCentral.com - "Top Psychiatric Medication Prescriptions for 2011" <http://psychcentral.com/lib/top-25-psychiatric-medication-prescriptions-for-2011/00012586>
4. CDC - "Antidepressant Use in Persons Aged 12 and Over: United States, 2005–2008" <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db76.htm>
5. PsychCentral.com – “How Long Do Antidepressants Take to Work?” psychcentral.com/lib/how-long-do-antidepressants-take-to-work/0008529
6. PsychCentral.com – “Side Effects of Antidepressant Medications” <http://psychcentral.com/lib/side-effects-of-antidepressant-medications/000318>
7. WebMD – “Remeron” <http://www.webmd.com/drugs/drug-13707-Remeron+Oral.aspx?drugid=13707&drugname=Remeron+Oral>
8. WebMD – “Depression Medicines” <http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/optimizing-depression-medicines>
9. HelpGuide.org “Anxiety Medication” http://www.helpguide.org/mental/anxiety_medication_drugs_treatment.htm

This information is not intended to be a substitute for medical advice. Consult a medical doctor for all questions and concerns about medication.