

DEPRESCRIBING: REDUCING MEDICATIONS SAFELY TO MEET LIFE'S CHANGES



deprescribing.org

INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE

Bruyère
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

FOCUS ON BENZODIAZEPINE RECEPTOR AGONISTS & Z-DRUGS (BZRAs)



As life changes, your medication needs may change as well. Medications that were once good for you, may not be the best choice for you now.

Deprescribing is a way for health care providers to help you safely cut back on medications.

WHAT ARE BENZODIAZEPINE RECEPTOR AGONISTS & Z-DRUGS?



- Drugs used to treat problems like anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- Examples include:

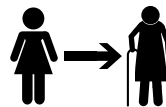
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|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Alprazolam (Xanax®) | • Diazepam (Valium®) | • Temazepam (Restoril®) |
| • Bromazepam (Lectopam®) | • Flurazepam (Dalmane®) | • Triazolam (Halcion®) |
| • Chlordiazepoxide (Librax®) | • Lorazepam (Ativan®) | • Zopiclone (Imovane®, Rhovane®) |
| • Clonazepam (Rivotril®) | • Nitrazepam (Mogadon®) | • Zolpidem (Sublinox®) |
| • Clorazepate (Tranxene®) | • Oxazepam (Serax®) | |



WHY CONSIDER REDUCING OR STOPPING A BZRA BEING USED FOR INSOMNIA?



- BZRAs can cause dependence, memory problems, daytime fatigue, and are linked to dementia and falls



- Many could take them for short periods (up to **4 weeks**) but remain on them for years



- BZRAs are not recommended at all (regardless of duration) in older persons as first line therapy for insomnia



- BZRAs may become less helpful for sleep after only a few weeks

HOW TO SAFELY REDUCE OR STOP A BZRA



- Ask your health care provider to find out if deprescribing is for you; BZRA doses should be reduced slowly with supervision



- Tell your health care provider about the BZRA deprescribing algorithm, available online: <http://deprescribing.org/resources/deprescribing-guidelines-algorithms/>



- Download the BZRA patient information pamphlet available online: <http://deprescribing.org/resources/deprescribing-information-pamphlets/>

Reference

Pottie K, Thompson W, Davies SJC, Grenier J, Sadowski CA, Welch V, et al. Deprescribing benzodiazepine receptor agonists: an evidence-based clinical practice guideline. *Can Fam Physician*. In press.

