



Soporifics and sedatives



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Centre National
de Prévention des Addictions

Most soporifics and sedatives prescribed in Luxembourg are benzodiazepines and similar medications, such as the so-called “Z-drugs”
(see table page 6)



Main active ingredient

- See table (page 6)



Legal status

- Legal
- Only available on prescription



Consumption modalities

- Orally (*tablets, capsules, drops*)
- Injection (*under medical supervision*)



Onset and duration of effect

- Orally
 - Differs according to drug
 - Onset: after 15 to 60 minutes
 - Duration: between one and 48 hours
- Injection
 - Onset: after a few seconds
 - Duration: differs according to drug, between one and 48 hours



Effects

- Decreases nervousness
- Reduces anxiety
- Soporific
- Muscle relaxant
- Antiepileptic



Risks and side effects

- Fatigue, dejection and drowsiness
- Emotional lethargy
- Impaired perceptive faculty and ability to react
- Loss of libido
- Paradoxical effects (*disinhibition, irritability*)
- Dizziness and difficulty walking
- Breathing difficulties
- Risk of falling and accidents



Long-term risks

- Dependence
- Problems concentrating
- Memory disorders
- Anxiety
- Depression

Worth knowing...

- ✓ Taking soporifics and sedatives can cause addiction. It is therefore recommended to stop taking these drugs after four to twelve weeks. There is also the risk of constantly having to increase the dose to achieve the same effect, especially with soporifics (*drug tolerance*).
- ✓ If you are using sedatives or soporifics over a protracted period, speak to your doctor about it. He/she can go into any issues and advise you about further treatment.
- ✓ Combined use with other substances with a depressive effect such as alcohol or barbiturates increases the risks and the danger of an overdose.
- ✓ A doctor should be consulted if you are pregnant. Soporifics and sedatives pass through the placental barrier, i.e. pass from mother to child.
- ✓ Effects and sedatives pose greater risks for the over-65s than for younger people: the effect is typically more pronounced and also lasts longer, not least because the body takes longer to eliminate medication.



Do soporifics improve sleep quality?

- The natural need for sleep reduces the older one gets, artificially extending sleep is therefore frequently not required.
- Soporifics and sedatives induce sleep and their primary effect is at nightfall. But they do not improve sleep quality.

Coming off medications – but how?

- When coming off soporifics or sedatives that have been taken over an extended period, “rebound” effects resembling the original symptoms of anxiety or sleep disorders may be experienced for a period of several days.
- Abruptly coming off medications can cause withdrawal symptoms that are occasionally associated with severe health risks.

This is why you should never come off soporifics and sedatives abruptly without first consulting your doctor!

Driving under the influence of medications?

- The use of soporifics and sedatives increases the risk of traffic accidents. Even during the day, they can result in increased fatigue, balance disorders and difficulty concentrating.

In the circumstances it is strongly advised not to drive or operate machinery.

Benzodiazepines and related substances available in Luxembourg (01 May 2020)

substance	trade name		
ALPRAZOLAM	ALPRAZ ALPRAZOLAM EG XANAX XANAX RETARD	MIDAZOLAM	MIDAZOLAM BUCCOLAM
BROMAZEPAM	BROMAZEPAM EG LEXOTAN	NITRAZEPAM	MOGADON
BROTIZOLAM	LENDORMIN	NORDAZEPAM	CALMDAY NORDAZ
CLOBAZAM	FRISIUM	OXAZEPAM	OXAZEPAM EG
CLONAZEPAM	RIVOTRIL	PRAZEPAM	LYSANXIA PRAZEPAM EG
CLORAZEPAT	TRANXENE UNI TRANXENE	TRIAZOLAM	HALCION
CLOTIAZEPAM	CLOZAN	ZOLPIDEM	STILNOCT ZOLPIDEM EG
DIAZEPAM	VALIUM	ZOPICLON	IMOVANE ZOPICLONE EG
FLUNITRAZEPAM	FLUNITRAZEPAM EG		
LOFLAZEPAT	VICTAN		
LOPRAZOLAM	DORMONCT		
LORAZEPAM	LORAZEPAM EG TEMESTA TEMESTA EXPIDET		
LORMETAZEPAM	LORAMET LORMETAZEPAM EG NOCTAMID STILAZE		



There is no such thing as a risk-free consumption of legal and illegal drugs!

When consuming any legal and illegal drug, the subjectively perceived effects depend on various factors (*how consumed, dose, age, gender, environment, mood as well as experience and expectation*).

Consumption of any drug can result in addiction.

The consumption of legal and illegal drugs is to be discouraged:

- In adolescence (*physical and mental development*)
- When driving and during other activities requiring a “clear head” (*e.g. sport, when operating machinery...*)
- In the workplace / in school
- During pregnancy and breastfeeding
- If there are previous medical conditions

Particular care is also required:

- If the quality of the product is unknown and cannot be checked
- In the event of combined use, e.g. alcohol and other drugs
- When medication is taken at the same time

If you notice that a person is not well after having consumed legal or illegal drugs, act responsibly and look after that person. If in doubt, phone the emergency number and administer first aid.



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**Tem perguntas sobre a
dependência, as drogas e as
ofertas de ajuda?**

***Questions about addiction,
drugs and assistance?***

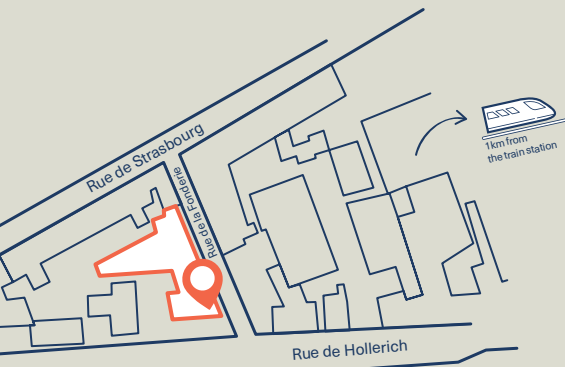
cnapa - Centre National de Prévention des Addictions - 2020. A presente brochura é financiada pelo fundo de luta contra certas formas de criminalidade.

cnapa - Centre National de Prévention des Addictions (National Centre for Addiction Prevention) - 2020. This leaflet is financed by the fighting fund against certain forms of criminality.



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Biblioteca (catálogo online): Empréstimo de livros e materiais didáticos

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