Side Effects of Anxiety Medications

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Anti-Anxiety Medication Adverse Effects—Is The Treatment Worth The Trouble?

The use of medications in individuals who have been diagnosed with an anxiety-related disorder is a common treatment practice in the United States. Mental health professionals and those in the psychological community have been prescribing anxiety medications to their patients for decades.

Older-generation medications to treat anxiety came with an abundance of potential adverse side effects that often interfered with the quality of life of an individual suffering from anxiety. Most of the medications were highly sedating and riddled with other unpleasant physical and mental effects that could potentially be worse than the actual anxiety experienced without medication.

While the number of newer generation anti-anxiety medications has grown over the recent years, many still carry with them a handful of side effects that may cause the patient to experience such effects that hinder and limit their daily schedules.

Anxiety Medications

Anxiety medications, or anxiolytic as such preparations are also known, are categorized as benzodiazepines. The benzodiazepine classification of prescription drugs to treat such disorders is designed to reduce symptoms of anxiety such as nervousness, shakiness, nausea, rapid or accelerated heart rate, sweating, and a sense of impending peril when no such danger truly exists. Benzodiazepines are also prescribed to certain children with autism, as they have a calming effect both mentally and physically for those with this disorder.

Several types of anti-anxiety medications are prescribed to treat the symptoms of anxiety. When taken at doctor-prescribed doses, anxiety medication can relieve or lessen the symptoms a patient may be experiencing as a result of anxiety. The following medications are currently the most often prescribed by physicians and psychiatrists:

- Diazepam.
- Alprazolam.
- Lorazepam.
- Clonazepam.

The above list of anxiety medications has similar side effects which are the following:

- Drowsiness.
- Lethargy.
- Dizziness.
- Impaired speech.
- Cloudy thinking or cognition.

- Confusion.
- Memory loss.
- Incoordination.

Depending on the specific dosage, the adverse effects of these medications will be exaggerated to some extent in certain individuals. A higher dosage will raise the likelihood of side effects being present. Most patients will experience a few of the side effects listed above regardless of the dosage. In many cases, the adverse effects may lessen or disappear as the body becomes accustomed to the medication.

Benzodiazepines are considered habit-forming and present a danger for addiction and abuse if taken more than the recommended dosage. The physical dependence on anxiety medication may occur even if the prescription is taken as directed by a physician.

For many individuals suffering from anxiety, the side effects of medication to treat the condition are small in comparison to experiencing the symptoms of anxiety. If monitored closely by a physician or mental health professional, many patients can safely take these medications without any serious concerns.

In some instances, doctors may recommend anti-depressant medication to individuals with anxiety that may be susceptible to addiction or abuse. There have been reports of positive outcomes in patients who have been prescribed such medications as selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), which carry far fewer unwanted side effects and still deliver adequate anxiety relief.

For anxiety sufferers plagued with unpleasant symptoms related to this disorder, the trouble of dealing with side effects is worth the improvement of anxiety problems.