

the PHARMACEUTICAL JOURNAL

A Royal Pharmaceutical Society publication

Benzodiazepines should not be given to patients with post-traumatic stress disorder

PJ pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/research-briefing/benzodiazepines-should-not-be-given-to-patients-with-post-traumatic-stress-disorder/20069017.article
The Pharmaceutical Journal 23 JUL 2015



Source: Zorandim / Dreamstime.com

Patients with post-traumatic stress disorder are often prescribed benzodiazepines

Patients with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are often prescribed benzodiazepines, despite a paucity of evidence to support the practice. Now, a systematic review and meta-analysis of six clinical trials and six cohort studies ($n=5,236$) has concluded that benzodiazepines are ineffective in PTSD and that the risks “tend to outweigh” potential short-term benefits.

Writing in the *Journal of Psychiatric Practice* (online, 14 July 2015)^[1], the researchers say that in addition to their adverse effects in general populations, benzodiazepines are associated with “specific problems” in PTSD patients, such as worse overall severity, significantly increased risk of developing PTSD with use after recent trauma, worse psychotherapy outcomes, aggression, depression and substance use.

Benzodiazepines “should be considered relatively contraindicated” for patients with PTSD or recent trauma, they conclude.

References:

^[1]Guina J, Rossetter SR, DeRhodes BJ *et al.* Benzodiazepines for PTSD: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *J Psychiatr Pract.* 2015;21(4):281–303. doi:10.1097/PRA.000000000000091.

Citation: The Pharmaceutical Journal, 25 July/1 August 2015, Vol 295, No 7872/3, online | DOI: 10.1211/PJ.2015.20069017