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Zyprexa (Olanzapine) Withdrawal Symptoms + How Long Do They Last?

Zyprexa (Olanzapine) is an atypical antipsychotic drug that is commonly utilized for the treatment of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. It works more on serotonin receptors than dopamine receptors, but targets both. Although this is a drug that can work well for treating severe mental illnesses, more than 50% of people quit taking it during clinical trials due to severe side effects. In comparison to the older "typical" antipsychotic drugs, the only advantage this medication has is slightly fewer side effects.

However, it is associated with greater weight gain than older antipsychotic medications. Of all antipsychotic drugs, this is the drug that has been found to cause the most weight gain. Zyprexa has been tested for eating disorders and anxiety disorders, but has not been found effective for treating either condition in clinical trials. The only conditions that this drug should be used to treat are schizophrenia and bipolar disorder – after other options with less side effects have been explored.

Most people that have taken Zyprexa end up coming to a point where they have to weigh the benefits they are getting with the side effects of the drug. A majority of individuals end up quitting simply because the side effects are overwhelming. These side effects can include: increased cholesterol, weight gain, metabolic changes, increased stroke risk in elderly and/or the development of diabetes.

Factors that influence Zyprexa withdrawal

Below are several factors that influence withdrawal from Zyprexa. Perhaps the most influential factors are time span over which you took the drug and your dosage. However individual factors and how quickly you taper off of the medication can also play a role.

1. Time Span

How long were you on Zyprexa? In general, the longer you take an antipsychotic medication, the more dependent you become on it for everyday functioning. If you took this drug for many years, it will likely be much more difficult to withdraw from in comparison to someone who just took it for a month or two.

2. Dosage

Most people that are on this drug for an extended period of time end up having to increase their dosage. The greater the dosage you take, the easier it is for your body to build a tolerance to that higher dose. When you withdraw from the medication from a higher dose, you will likely need to conduct a longer taper than someone who is just on a low dose. If you quit cold turkey from a high dose, the withdrawal symptoms are thought to last much longer and be more severe.

For schizophrenia, most individuals take between 10 mg and 15 mg daily. The recommended starting dose is typically 5 mg. In general, most psychiatrists will gradually titrate a patient up to a dose that provides relief from symptoms. Antipsychotics carry powerful side effects and usually the lowest effective dose is recommended to minimize those effects.

3. Cold Turkey vs. Tapering

Did you quit cold turkey or did you conduct a gradual taper? Antipsychotics like Zyprexa are very serious drugs and the withdrawal effects can be debilitating. It is always recommended to conduct a very gradual taper to allow your body to slowly adjust to functioning without the drug over a period of time. In general the tapering period should be influenced by your current dose as well as how long you took the drug.

If you were on this particular drug for an extended period of time, it is recommended to taper at a rate of 10% per month. By slowly reducing your dose, you will give your neurotransmitters some time to accommodate and adjust to changes in the amount of the drug you ingest. If you are very sensitive to even minor reductions in dose, you can request a liquid compound that will allow you to reduce your dose by fractions of milligrams.

4. Personal Factors

Individual factors play a huge role in determining the difficulty of withdrawal. Some people naturally are very sensitive to changes in dosage and may have a much more difficult time withdrawing. Additionally some people have much more social support than others which helps them cope with their experience coming off of the drug.

People taking other medications or transitioning to another antipsychotic may not even notice much of a withdrawal compared to individuals who were only taking Zyprexa. Some individuals have better dietary habits, sleeping patterns, exercise habits, less stressful jobs, etc. – all these factors can play a role in influencing withdrawal. Therefore it is recommended to not compare yourself to that of other people when withdrawing.

Zyprexa Withdrawal Symptoms: List of Possibilities

Below is a list of symptoms that you may experience when coming off of Zyprexa. Keep in mind that not everyone will experience every single symptom listed below. You

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may experience a few of the symptoms or many and the severity of withdrawal will be influenced by individual factors.

- **Anxiety:** Many people report very extreme anxiety when they quit Zyprexa. This is a drug that many people find calming and when taken away, a person can feel extremely anxious. Do your best to practice relaxation exercises and recognize that the anxiety is part of withdrawal.
- **Appetite changes:** While on Zyprexa, many people experience significant increases in appetite. A person may feel as if they are never full and/or are transforming into Hulk as a result of the food that they eat. When coming off of Zyprexa, most people experience decreased appetite.
- **Bipolar symptoms:** Some people may experience a reemergence of Bipolar symptoms (e.g. mania) when they quit taking this drug. If you have Bipolar disorder and are on this medication, proceed slowly and with caution when withdrawing.
- **Concentration problems:** If you find it very difficult to concentrate on tasks such as reading, writing, and/or work, you are not alone. Many people have major difficulties with focusing when they are going through withdrawal. This symptom tends to improve over time as your brain adapts to functioning without the drug.
- **Confusion:** When you experience a bunch of uncomfortable physical symptoms accompanied by foggy thinking, concentration problems, and emotional disturbances, this can result in a state of confusion. If you feel confused often, just know that this will improve over time.
- **Crying spells:** The depression that people experience when quitting an antipsychotic like Zyprexa can be very tough to deal with. This may result in a person crying excessively because they feel so down in the dumps.
- **Depersonalization:** Do you feel unlike your old "normal" self? This is because your neurotransmitters are out of balance and have changed since you took the medication. It will likely take your brain some time to reset its homeostatic functioning.
- **Depression:** Many people report extreme depression when they stop taking this drug. The depression is thought to be a result of lowered levels of dopamine and serotonin. You should eventually experience some lift in mood after some time off of the medication.
- **Diarrhea:** Some people experience diarrhea when they discontinue this medication. This isn't an extremely common symptom, but one that has been reported. If this is the case, you may want to consider some over the counter Imodium.
- **Dizziness:** Among the most common withdrawal symptoms from any psychiatric medication is that of dizziness. It is common for people to feel very dizzy, especially if the tapering was done too quickly. Dizziness will eventually lessen over time as the brain functioning readjusts.
- **Fatigue:** Most people report excessive tiredness and general fatigue when they come off of Zyprexa. You may have a difficult time performing everyday tasks because your energy level is so low. Just know that your energy level will eventually return as time passes.
- **Hallucinations:** There is evidence pointing to the fact that some people experience psychotic symptoms as a result of withdrawal. This is thought to be a result of changes in dopamine receptor functioning and dopamine levels.
- **Headaches:** Some people experience splitting severe headaches when they come off of this medication. Having headaches accompanied by dizziness can be a very difficult one-two punch. Just know that these should subside after your body restores proper functioning.
- **Insomnia:** This drug tends to calm people down and in many cases makes them sleepy. When coming off of it, the opposite can be true. Some people report such intense anxiety and an inability to fall asleep. Insomnia may persist for quite some time after your last dose. It should improve as you make some lifestyle changes and your neurotransmitter levels change.
- **Irritability:** Do you notice yourself becoming increasingly irritable? If you feel more irritable than normal and little things set you off, it may be a result of withdrawal. Neurotransmitter levels are in fluctuation, which is thought to lead to people feeling irritable.
- **Memory problems:** It is very common to experience poor memory functioning upon drug discontinuation. It isn't well known as to why these drugs can lead to memory problems. With that said, most people do experience improvements in memory with time off of the drug.
- **Mood swings:** Some people experience pretty severe mood swings upon discontinuation. One minute you may feel as though the withdrawal is over, the next you may feel swamped in a state of deep depression. For this I'm not referring to "bipolar" mood swings, rather just unexpected changes in mood.
- **Muscle cramps:** Those who have taken this medication over the long term may experience muscle cramps and/or weakness during the withdrawal process.
- **Nausea:** Many people report intense nausea during the time in which they discontinue their medication. The nausea can be severe to the point that a person also vomits. In general, the nausea after the last dose shouldn't last more than a couple weeks.
- **Panic attacks:** Some individuals report experiencing heightened anxiety to the point of panic attacks. In other words, a person experiences such high arousal that everyday activities lead to intense feelings of panic.
- **Psychosis:** It has been documented that [withdrawal from antipsychotics can cause psychosis](#). It is not very common to experience this upon withdrawal, but it does happen. Obviously this may signify the reemergence of schizophrenia, but in those without schizophrenia, it can be part of withdrawal.
- **Restlessness:** If you feel especially restless for no apparent reason, it is likely due to the withdrawal that you are experiencing. The changes in neurotransmitters, elevated level of arousal, and anxious thinking can make a person restless.
- **Suicidal thinking:** It is extremely common to feel suicidal during your withdrawal. You may experience suicidal thoughts that seem as if they will never subside. Over time, these should gradually subside. If you feel suicidal and cannot cope with these thoughts, please seek professional help.
- **Sweating:** Many people sweat intensely when they withdraw from psychiatric drugs – this antipsychotic is no exception. If you notice that you are sweating profusely throughout the day and wake up sweating in the middle of the night, just know it's part of the process.
- **Vomiting:** Feel flu-like to the point that you are nauseous and keep vomiting? Some people have reported intense vomiting spells during the first week or two when they initially quit this medication. To reduce this symptom, be sure to wean off of Zyprexa as gradually as possible.
- **Weight loss:** Taking this drug is known to increase appetite and slow metabolism, which leads to many people gaining weight. Zyprexa is one of the worst drugs for trying to keep weight off – most people eat way too much food on this drug in

particular. When you stop taking it and stay off of it for awhile, you should also lose the weight that you gained.

Zyprexa Withdrawal Length: How long does it last?

When it comes to withdrawal from Zyprexa, there is really no exact timeline that can be followed. The withdrawal symptoms and length have a lot to do with individual factors such as: how you tapered off the drug, how long you had taken it, and whether you are on other medications. For people that have taken this drug for a long term, the withdrawal symptoms may linger for over 90 days. For others, the withdrawal may only persist for a couple of weeks – it totally depends.

If you worked closely with a professional for tapering off of Zyprexa and gradually weaned off of the drug over a period of weeks or months, you may not have many symptoms following your last dose. On the other hand, someone who has taken it for years and decides to quit "cold turkey" may find themselves really struggling with severe symptoms as their brain attempts to rewire itself for functioning without the drug.

I always recommend evaluating symptoms after 90 days. Many people overreact with intense panic and anxiety in the first few weeks thinking that their withdrawal symptoms will never improve. The reality is that with good sleep, proper diet, exercise, and structure (e.g. work), most people will notice improvement in their withdrawal after 3 months being drug-free. Even if you are not fully recovered after 90 days, you will likely feel much improved compared to the initial couple weeks of withdrawal.

If you have successfully withdrawn from Zyprexa or are currently experiencing withdrawal symptoms, feel free to share your thoughts in the comments below. Your experience may greatly help another person who is going through the same withdrawal.

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Amy

October 2, 2018, 11:05 am

Just came off Olanzapine two weeks ago after taking it for 3 years. In the end I was only on a dose of 2.5 so my psychiatrist said I could just stop this as such a low dose.

Been OK on the symptoms other than severe horrible nausea and am hoping this goes soon. Anyone know how long nausea lasted for them? I have had to leave work twice now as it got so bad.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Melanie

October 2, 2018, 12:51 am

I was on zyprexa for 16 years. Tried to get off of it for years – it was excruciating. Finally after gaining 40 lbs, high cholesterol, short-term memory loss and other symptoms, I said enough. It has been hell getting off this drug. Severe splitting headaches, insomnia, nausea, dizziness etc. Don't get on it!!!

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Mohamed

September 27, 2018, 4:58 pm

Hi all. I am in a difficult position and would happy to accept advice. My dad aged 58 is diagnosed with schizophrenia for more than 30 years and since the past 5 years all anti-psychotics (including the later drugs such as Zyprexa/olanzapine) results in an elevated CK which doctors diagnoses as Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS).

My dad sufferer with serve leg and chest pains as a result of the NMS due to his olanzapine intake. 3 out of 4 psychiatrists recommends he stop his daily dose of 20mg olanzapine. The stopping of Olanzapine results in a major relapse which requires hospital admission so that he be in a contained cared environment.

Hospital care has become financially expensive and I am forced to take care of my dad at home with olanzapine.

Other meds he takes include:

- *Epilem 600mg twice a day as a mood stabilizer
- *Clonazepam 0.5mg, 0.5mg and 2mg
- *Promethazine 50mg at night
- *Olanzapine 20mg at night

Is anyone perhaps in the same situation or can share a potential solution?

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Susan

September 7, 2018, 12:04 pm

Three weeks into withdrawal. The worst part of my withdrawal are physical symptoms.

No anxiety etc. just debilitating tiredness, dizziness, nausea, headaches and difficulty getting to sleep at night. I was not aware that there would be any side effects at all so this came as a complete surprise to me.

Have been on this med for 17 years maximum dose 10 mils for a short period of time, but mostly 5 mils. Went down to 2.5 a year ago and then decided to stop completely. During these 17 years have given up cannabis, tobacco and also a gambling addiction. I walk for an hour and do yoga 5 days a week and also go to the gym once a week and do weights.

My diet is good and I take fish oil tablets every day. Was prescribed Zoloft at the same of time as Zyprexa but gave that up last year with no problems. So at the moment for the first time in ages I am completely drug free and that is a positive for me.

After reading what everybody else has said, I feel hopeful that eventually things will get better. Thanks for taking the time to make comments on this page as I am doing my withdrawal on my own and they have helped a lot.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

alison

September 22, 2018, 12:23 pm

Hello Susan. I had all the same symptoms as you. I too am doing this all on my own and have nobody to help me at all. (My GP insists there are no such things as Olanzapine withdrawals). It does get easier slowly. I seem to have good days and then bad days. The fatigue and foggy head are still bad. Good luck and keep in touch.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Matt

August 30, 2018, 12:59 pm

Into the 9th week of withdrawal. Weight loss is now at 11kg. I've maintained a perfect diet, walked daily, used the exercise bike daily for 20km and some weight work (light). Have all my energy back with no withdrawal symptoms anymore other than my sleep is not quite back to normal. Good luck everybody.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Soni

August 31, 2018, 7:03 pm

Hey Matt, How long were you on the drug?

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Matt

September 7, 2018, 9:07 am

Hi Soni, Sorry about the delay in answering you, but my last comment to you didn't for some reason come up here. To answer your question approx 4-5 months. I've come off olanzapine and clonazepam at the same time, and obviously had withdrawal symptoms – the worst I guess was the insomnia. I made a lot of personal lifestyle changes which paid off in the end. Hope this helped.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

alison

August 31, 2018, 8:17 pm

I've been following your progress Matt. I'm so glad to hear how well you are doing. Well done. I'm into week 6 myself. Still suffering from terrible fatigue, ear pressure and insomnia. But hoping that there's light at the end of the tunnel soon.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Matt

September 5, 2018, 8:18 am

Hi Alison, Glad to hear you're 6 weeks in. The fatigue is definitely one of the symptoms that I had to deal with too. And that insomnia, I thought it would never end. I found, however, the better I ate and the more exercise I did daily, the quicker I got my sleep pattern back.

Please keep your head up, try and not let anything stress you out too much, and you will be through it. You've made it to 6 weeks, everything improves from here. Cheers.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

alison

September 22, 2018, 12:30 pm

Hi Matt, Thanks for the reply. I hope you are still really well? It's now 9 weeks and things are good and bad. Sometimes I have a better day, only for it to go worse the next day. But nowhere near as bad as when I started!!

I can't do exercise unfortunately, as I have severe arthritis and cant always even dressed. But I do try to keep de-stressed by relaxation tapes or just wandering around the garden! I am struggling with fatigue still, but for some reason I now have bad stomach cramps.

All investigated by the doctor and all clear. It must be another Olanzapine-thing? But I am being positive and thinking that if I can get to week 9, then I can definitely get to week 10. Best of luck to you. Alison

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Charles

August 17, 2018, 5:00 pm

Destroyed Brain, Digestion, Life, and Some Recovery and Hope. My story: I was on 2.5 mg of olanzapine for one and a half years (prescribed for insomnia and anxiety),

started to gain weight, getting speaking issues, and initial symptoms of tardive dyskinesia (shaking uncontrollable limbs).

So I decided to get off of olanzapine, told my psychiatrist so who said I should not get off of olanzapine, but if I want to I should wean off of it in 2 weeks time gradually and it will be fine. I weaned off of it in 6 weeks time instead, going very slowly (in the end I was taking small pieces of pill powder).

Despite that, one week after my last dose, I got severe anxiety, sleeplessness, stroke-like symptoms, and severe digestive issues (diarrhea 3-4 times a day). I developed paranoid schizophrenia in a couple of days, I was not even able to walk down the street from phobias and hallucinations I got.

My hippocampus was damaged too, my spatial sense was gone, becoming unable to control and sense my limbs, I got severe memory and cognitive issues, and simultanagnosia. I became totally dysfunctional and weak, so I started taking olanzapine again after 2 weeks, my anxiety was gone, I could sleep again, but the other symptoms stayed.

The psychiatrist told me that is because I need more of the drug and I need other types of drugs too (SSRI etc.). The psychiatrist said I was already developing schizophrenia and OCD, and my symptoms are not related to olanzapine or its withdrawal. This is a lie, because I am older than 30 and schizophrenia develops under 30 only.

The truth is, olanzapine and the possible dopamine overload that resulted from the withdrawal burnt my neurons making me brain damaged. (My MRI shows no stroke, so it was not a stroke, it was neuron burnout.) As a result of my new weird behavior and constant toilet times, I lost my job and my girlfriend, I lost my life. (I have an MSC degree, by the way.)

I attempted a second withdrawal half a year later, 3 months long slow dose reduction this time. This time, it worked, I did not get anxiety and sleeplessness. However, all other symptoms stayed. My digestion got so bad I almost died however. No doctor was able to/willing to help me in my country (our healthcare is basically dysfunctional anyway). Psychiatrists wanted to put me on other drugs, which I refused.

Some recovery: Based on internet information, I started taking large doses of B12 vitamin (> 200 micrograms per day), and I healed my digestion to some extent with digestive aids. I also resumed exercising once I was strong enough again. Soon after B12 vitamin treatment started, my schizophrenic symptoms started to diminish.

Now, one year after, my schizophrenic phobic and hallucinative symptoms are gone up to 90%. My dopamine receptors seem to have normalized largely.

Symptoms that remained: Memory, cognitive, and body control issues, simultanagnosia.

Current plan: I am trying to rebuild my brain now, they say neurons slowly regenerate or new ones are built, I hope it is happening indeed.

Hope and my suggestions for others:

-If you are already on olanzapine and you were not schizophrenic before, immediately start weening off of it before it is too late and refuse any and all psychiatric drug (unless some sleeping pills or weak dosages of benzos like xanax), rather choose other means to relax. (Some substances may be demonized and illegal in your country, they are still less dangerous than antipsychotics in my opinion.) Wean off of it extremely slowly, if you took it for 1 year for example, wean off of it in 4 months or more by gradually reducing dosage to avoid dopamine overload which burns out your neurons.

-If you have tried to get off of olanzapine already and got brain damaged like me, start taking large doses of B12 vitamin as well on a daily basis. Start exercising, do whatever makes you feel better.

-If you have not taken any antipsychotics and you are reading this out of curiosity considering taking them... Unless you are extremely schizophrenic and dysfunctional, DO NOT EVER TAKE ANY ANTIPSYCHOTICS!!!

General comment on psychiatry: Psychiatry is interested in making dysfunctional sick zombies that need their drugs to survive and cashing in from this. Drug companies and most psychiatrists included. Their drugs do not heal any brain sickness, they only cause more brain sickness, even if they seem to provide some initial relief. Avoid psychiatry at any cost if you can. Use other means and do not feed this monster.

I am wishing the best recovery for everyone. I will post an update if my hippocampus shows signs of recovery. I hope this helps someone. Charles

REPLY LINK

Margaret

September 1, 2018, 7:14 am

A really great and informative write up – thank-you very much.

REPLY LINK

Tamara

September 17, 2018, 2:34 am

Charles. Before I read your comment I thought I was being brave. I am sick of all the medication I am and have been fed since I was 13 years old. I am diagnosed with bipolar 2 disorder with psychotic features and borderline personality disorder. I am 35 years old. I was on 7.5mg of Zyprexa.

I decided to stop cold turkey for my own reasons. It's been 3 days and so far my only symptoms have been nausea, diarrhea, headaches, insomnia, concentration issues and partial panic attacks. After reading this article I thought maybe I could withstand this for 90 days but your comment...

I don't want what happened to you to happen to me. It scared me straight. I've quit my meds before and had psychosis and mania, but that wasn't Zyprexa. Thank you for your comment and I'm sorry for your troubles. Best of luck to you.

Mimi

September 11, 2018, 8:38 pm

I'm not schizophrenic, and olanzapine has saved my life. You shouldn't generalize and give out this bogus information. Anecdotal stories are not the same as actual scientific data. Psychiatry is not evil and it's horrible that you're spreading that lie.

Before psychiatric medication I was a zombie who was too afraid to leave the house. Now, after being on medication, I maintain a career, healthy relationships, and much more. You have no idea what you're talking about and shouldn't act like you do.

REPLY LINK

Min

September 18, 2018, 2:07 pm

Good for you, Mimi – I couldn't agree more! Olanzapine saved my sister's life. All of these drugs have an upside as well as a downside. I was on venlafaxine for many years, and now rely on celexa and topiramate to function. I wish it wasn't the case, but I think we're lucky that we have these options today.

Far better to be a functioning, productive human being than shut up on a psych ward. There's a strong biological component to some of what we experience, and we do what we can to manage it. At least, that's how I see it. Hugs to everyone going through this, no matter what their perspective. Min.

REPLY LINK

Matt

August 7, 2018, 10:41 am

Ok, so nearly six weeks into withdrawal. After being on this for 4 months I tapered from 5 mg to 2.5. And then came off completely. Don't worry about the weight – that will come off. The dizziness goes, as does the anxiety. My sleep patterns are improving. I simply eat very well.

I don't feel like exercising but force myself to use an exercise bike everyday. Of course, don't smoke or drink any alcohol at all. Feeling I'm at the closing stages of the withdrawal and have adjusted my diet to include super foods recently which has resulted in a 6 kg weight loss.

Feeling quite well, hope this helped someone out there.

REPLY LINK

Matt

August 2, 2018, 7:42 am

Hi. Has anyone experienced dry eyes whilst coming off olanzapine? For me, eye drops only work for short periods of time. Any ideas would be greatly appreciated. Cheers.

REPLY LINK

Gary

August 1, 2018, 3:46 pm

Was on 5 mg of Olanzapine for about two weeks; then reduced to 2.5 mg for about two weeks, then tapered down to .312 over a month's time (1.25 for 10 days; .625 for 10 days; .312 for 10 days) then off. Been off for 11 days, experiencing intermittent dizziness, anxiety, headaches. How long will this last?

REPLY LINK

Joyce

July 26, 2018, 3:54 pm

God bless you all who are withdrawing from Zyprexa. I was on it for 6 years at 10mg. God knows why so long. I had brief psychosis due to extreme stress years ago and changed psychiatrist 2 years ago. He wanted me to come off of it so I did a gradual taper for a year. I took my last dose of 1/2 2.5 mg in March.

It was a living hell for 2 months. I mean hell!! Severe insomnia, severe anxiety, nausea, extreme fatigue and suicidal thoughts. I had to be put on Ambien and Klonopin to survive. It's been 4 months and I am better but not the same as years ago.

I have horrible anxiety, insomnia and I just can't do as much in a day without feeling dizzy. Zyprexa is the worst drug around and I feel sorry for all of you on it. I was a zombie for 6 years. My self awareness is back and I am very aware not to trust anyone anymore.

I've had it with this withdrawal process and now I'm hooked on Ambien and Klonopin. I don't drink or do drugs and I eat healthy every day. I wonder if I'll ever feel good again.

REPLY LINK

Emma

July 16, 2018, 7:34 pm

Everyone experiences medications differently and in Zyprexa, a lot of us experience serious side effects. I've been on this medication for a solid year and was previously on it back in 2014 when Risperdal didn't work. Weight gain sucked.

Withdrawal symptoms are awful. But for my own situation, the benefits outweigh the risks. I have gone from 20 mg to between 5mg and 2.5mg. I think it really, really depends on what you're comfortable on compromising with.

REPLY LINK

Palak

July 15, 2018, 4:52 pm

I am taking Schizol Plus 2.5 (olanzapine + fluoxetine) since last 6 to 7 months. I have tried many times to quit that, but every time I ended up being sick (vomiting, nausea, anxiety and feeling of uneasiness). Then, again, I start with the same doses and same medication.

Today I am once again starting to lower the dose of Olanzapine. I really want to come out of it, please tell me if anything can help.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Bruce

August 12, 2018, 2:59 am

The only way to do it, is with medical advice and by sticking to it. The side effects are horrible, I came off olanzapine 15mg daily and it took months. I was taking this medication for over 10 years. I was prescribed oxazepam 60mg daily to assist with the withdrawals, and it helped.

Keep in mind though, oxazepam IS addictive and can only be used short term. Anyone who knows the severity of the withdrawals of tapering off Olanzapine, will tell you they were extreme and hard to cope with, but persistence and perseverance is the only way you will succeed.

There is no easy way, but if you really need to come off them, you can't back down when symptoms get too much. Make sure you have a doctor guiding you every step of the way, and when it's too much, get to your Doctor.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Sheila

July 4, 2018, 10:53 pm

Wow, all these horror stories really have me worried – I've only been on 2.5 mg for a month, and I just started cutting down to half a tablet (though good luck getting those tiny pills to cut in half equally) and am really concerned about the possibility of a scary bad withdrawal experience... any words of advice? I'm not good at withdrawals. :(

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Allison

July 9, 2018, 4:19 am

2.5 mg for a month – you should be able to stop without unruly symptoms. Work with your doc, but insist that you get off this med! Eli-Lilly has settled for billions in suits regarding side effects of this poison. My docs failed to inform me that it is nasty addictive!

British long term studies show that people off this drug do better than those who continue to take it. Finally – do your own research online. Be skeptical of what you read and consider the source, compare notes to several sources.

Best plan for cessation is to taper off – 2.5 mg is a low dose and doesn't need to taper, especially after only a month. You're likely better off stopping now at 2.5mg rather than continuing the med and having your system develop an addiction to it.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Sheila

July 9, 2018, 10:43 pm

Thank you so much for your reply! I took my last 1/2 pill two days ago and so far so good. I've researched this nasty drug and still don't understand why my psych put me on it.

My GP said it should never have been prescribed for me; I'm neither schizophrenic nor bi-polar – the psych said it would help with my mood swings, but for the most part I suffer anxiety and depression, and if anything, the Zyprexa made both symptoms FAR worse.

Good to know I'm not alone out here.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Ann

August 20, 2018, 10:47 pm

Thank you. On Zyprexa for 2 weeks. Coming off – having depression & crying spells. Just sitting in the chair for hours. Thanks for your input.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Earl

July 3, 2018, 4:24 am

I've been on zyprexa for 5 years, the doctor prescribed it to me for my insomnia. It helped with the insomnia at first and then it started to stop working. I tried quitting it multiple times each time I got so sick I ended up taking it again just to relieve the withdrawals.

This drug is a nightmare to quit. I'm on week two and I still feel like crap. Only thing I would recommend for anybody newly prescribed to this drug is to do research on anything the doctors give you. Who knows if a little THC might help my insomnia just as well instead of this poison.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Eda

July 2, 2018, 1:49 pm

I have taken olanzapine 2.5 mg at nights for more than 6 months. At first, this

medication worked well on me: it relaxed my mood, allowed me to have good night sleep and gave me physical and emotional strength. Unfortunately, I put on so much weight and because of this, I started to feel myself down and depressed.

Therefore, I decided to quit from this medicine and stopped taking it almost two weeks ago. At first, I felt quite well and normal and full of energy. But after 1 week since I stopped the medicine, I have started to feel extremely bad.

I have anxiety, dizziness, bad quality sleep, feel fatigued, find it very difficult to concentrate on tasks, have memory problems and am experiencing crying spells. :(I don't know how long it takes to get over these symptoms.

I am very hopeless and desperate now... I decided to see my doctor soon, hope I can feel better with some medical help.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Michael

July 4, 2018, 1:44 pm

I have taken olanzapine around 5 months and have decided I want to stop. Seeing your comment has given me insight of what to expect.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Eda

July 6, 2018, 12:12 pm

Hi Michael, Please do not expect the same symptoms I have been experiencing so far. This medicine has different withdrawal symptoms for different people who have diverse health stories. You can consult your doctor before stopping to relieve the withdrawal symptoms.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Matt

July 5, 2018, 2:08 am

Hi Eda. Don't worry, things get better. I'm coming off olanzapine now and don't feel real great – but know that the symptoms are only temporary.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Eda

July 6, 2018, 12:08 pm

Hi Matt, My symptoms were quite bad and my doctor put me on olanzapine 2.5 mg again. I have some changes in my life and due to these changes I cannot afford to quit olanzapine at the moment. But after having settled my life, I will try to quit this medicine again...

Hope you experience the symptoms very slightly and quit the medicine successfully...

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Matt

July 23, 2018, 11:32 am

Hi. I've recently come off olanzapine and after a few weeks I feel quite well, other than over sleeping a little, dizziness, and a few headaches. However, I was wondering whether anyone has experienced dry eyes, nose and lips whilst coming off this drug. Thanks, Matt.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Sheila

July 11, 2018, 4:51 pm

The withdrawal symptoms are horrible even for someone like me who was on a low dose for a short period. For me the anxiety and irritability are the worst – I feel like I'm going to snap and hurt myself or someone else. I hate this drug and hate what it does – you hang in there and let's both remember that this will end!

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Veronica

June 30, 2018, 9:45 am

My name is Veronica and I am from Papua New Guinea. My son is in a similar situation and who has been on olanzapine for 12 years and just this year March has come off of the medication and he is going through hell. Many of the comments I read are similar to what my son is going through. I need help with how to help my son.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Emma

July 16, 2018, 7:38 pm

I am absolutely NOT a psych, but for the anxiety, my best help is hydroxyzine. I don't know if it's available to you, but a very small dose really helps my anxiety and it's a "take as you need" kind of med. Hope this helps a little!

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Victoria

June 29, 2018, 10:06 pm

Been on olanzapine for about a month or more and it's not working for me so decided to go off it. I've been taking half of my 2.5 for a week now and thought that would be long enough to not get withdrawals – as it's a low dose that I was originally on.

Three days ago I thought I gave it enough time and never took it. I was hallucinating and felt like I was tripping on shrooms. Couldn't sleep the whole night, it was awful!!!

Too scared to go off the half I'm currently on now. Can't go through that again! For now I

just want to go off the olanzapine but I'm so scared of going through those side effects again. ?

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Sheila

July 2, 2018, 2:32 pm

I have only been on 2.5 dose for a little over a month and wanted to get off of it as well – started taking one on alternate nights but skipped two nights and feel horrible. Like a bad case of flu with depression and anxiety – so I can relate to what you're going through.

I hate to keep taking the stuff but don't know how to deal with this horrible withdrawal. Best of luck to you in kicking it completely – bad, nasty drug!

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Allison

June 17, 2018, 4:40 am

I was hallucinating and the Emergency Room doc gave me 15mg Olanzapine (Zyprexa) for "bi-polar" mania. I'm sure the hallucinations were from chronic / acute cannabis use. Cannabis has made me manic in the past, and because it's legal here in OR I over-did. Substance abuse is one of my listed disabilities.

We stopped the cannabis cold, six months now. Six months on Zyprexa – 10 mg to 7.5 mg, to 5 mg, then 2.5 mg for a couple days. Taper from 10 mg to 2.5 mg over 6 weeks or so. Supervised by my docs.

Biggest Sx (side effect) from stopping is lack of sound sleep. I awake after 4 hrs of herky-jerking sleep, then maybe get another hour or two of dozing off. Not sleeping is a cause of mania, and my doc is worried. (It's the pot, not the lack of sleep!)

Sx are mild, not sleeping mostly. My doc is supervising this cessation, down from 15 mgs to 10 mg then 7.5 mg for 10 days to 5mg to 2.5 "for 10 days" — but I went 5mg for 10 days then 2.5 for a couple days. Then stop – more or less, for 5 days. (Sometimes I'll take 2.5mg at 2 am because I can't sleep – but it doesn't help much.

Keeping active helps: walking, hanging out, shopping, driving, Sleeping in front of the TV is bad news. I have issues with psychiatric meds, which alienates my psychiatrist. She worries that I will relapse on the mania.

I assure her that it's cannabis induced and I've been here before in my 70 decades in this life. I was Rx for Trazodone too — stopped that one at the first couple weeks on the Zyprexa. My doc gives me a big "NO WAY IN HELL" for benzos. I agree.

Long standing substance issues, Rx and otherwise. I feel best, and will get better most readily by getting off the meds/substances. We're doing the "clean and sober / abstinence and it feels good. Zyprexa Sx are mild and recovery is just down the road a bit.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Debbie

July 29, 2018, 5:28 pm

My now 38 year old autistic son was placed on zyprexa in 1997. This demon drug, along with the many others have taken my original son. Replacing him with someone else. He was almost 300lbs, physically ill, cognitively regressing and completely out of control when I decided to begin the weaning process.

We are down to only 15 mg of zyprexa (5mg, 2.5, 5mg 2.5) and ativan 1mg taken as needed (no more than twice per day). In April 2018 we decided to start the use of indica strain cannabis. I believe that without the use of cannabis and a very clean whole foods diet, we could never have been able to help wean my son off all the psychotropics and mood stabilizers (up to 60 pills per day!).

I know removal of the last 15 mg of zyprexa won't be easy. However, I am confident that we will be successful in the next 2 years. I am 64 and look forward to my son being drug free one day soon.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Ric

May 23, 2018, 11:43 pm

I have been off it for 2 years now from a maximum dose of 10mg and had taken it for 7 years. I recommend taking magnesium supplements, as well as exercise, general multivitamins and fish oils. Have a small glass of wine to help go to sleep. Also titrate off slowly. Good luck, it can be done.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Tracey

May 18, 2018, 2:59 pm

I took 10mg Zyprexa for nearly 2 years for health anxiety. When I started tapering I was not too bad until the last dose, then it was hell. No sleep, nausea, morning vomiting and severe anxiety, which was much worse than the original anxiety I suffered.

My psych said it was my anxiety coming back as I came off the pills and wanted me to either start taking them again or take benzos. I refused and persisted. After five weeks, the anxiety and sickness stopped but the insomnia continued. It has now been five years and my sleep cycle is just about back to normal.

It took at least two years to get a reasonable amount of sleep (more than three or four hours of broken sleep) sleeping tablets did nothing. The only respite had in the last couple of years was melatonin. Finally, I am able to sleep without that too.

I was prescribed Zyprexa for health anxiety and it turned me into a zombie who still worried about my health but did nothing other than sit on the couch. I am so glad I

persisted and came off this drug and would never take it again. I feel like me again.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Greg

May 13, 2018, 2:26 pm

Update: Today is week 10 since being off Zyprexa. The last 2 weeks I've felt much better. The anxiety, nausea, flu like feeling, constant headache that I couldn't get rid off, nervousness, sweats, muscle twitching are all gone. My sleep is still hit and miss. I'll have 2-3 days per week where I'll get 6-7 hours sleep.

I feel real good on those days. I take 150mg Trazodone and CBD oil for sleep. I think the CBD works better than the Trazodone. I still feel tired with little energy on days I get little sleep. However, it's tolerable and I can deal with it. After I swim, the tiredness and low energy disappears.

I'm probably feeling 75% better. I'm so happy and all my family says they haven't seen me look and act like a normal person since 2003 when I was put on Zyprexa. I honestly thought the withdrawals would never end. It was about week 8 when I started getting good days and bad days.

Now it's almost all good days. It's a long haul. There's really nothing my doctor prescribed that helped relieve the withdrawals other than Trazodone for sleep (only helped a little bit). Valium did zero for anxiety or sleep, Ambien did nothing for sleep. Don't get addicted to Benzodiazepines. It's hell getting off those too.

I knew to stop the Valium when it wasn't working. I had to withdraw from Klonopin in 2003. I suggest a real hard aerobic workout everyday. You're not gonna feel like doing anything but you have to force yourself to exercise. That is really the only thing that helped besides CBD.

My sleep really improved when I started taking 25mg CBD each night. I didn't believe CBD would work but there are so many people on other websites who had success with CBD I had to try it. Everybody is different. I was on 30mg Zyprexa each night for 15 years.

I tapered for about a month and got withdraws from day 1 of the taper. After a month I said screw this and stopped completely. All I'm trying to do is provide others with my timeline and what worked for me. It takes a strong mind and willpower. Hang in there. Good luck to all.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Maryanne Woods

May 24, 2018, 2:08 pm

Thanks, Greg. Hearing about your experience really helps. I'm on Day 3 of withdrawal and it's very hard. I'm going to try the CBD oil.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Allison

July 9, 2018, 4:45 am

Let me suggest here that the solution to withdrawal is not more drugs. CBD is getting touted as a miracle remedy for everything. Be skeptical! The research on CBD is spotty and unreliable. My docs suggested Melatonin for sleep.

Melatonin is used for a variety of symptoms and there is lots of information available online. Having wrestled with Olanzapine (Zyprexa), I'm hesitant to add meds to my system. I'm finding that staying hydrated (no caffeine!) and exercise helps with the side effects of withdrawal.

5 months on a dose we tapered down to 2.5 mg and now 3 weeks of no Olanzapine at all. I get night sweats and herky-jerky sleep, just general fatigue – but it's getting better with hydration, exercise and staying away from the caffeine.

I'm candidly skeptical about adding drugs to the system to address the drugs being withdrawn from the system. My docs counsel to "ride it out" – three weeks and symptoms are tolerable. Being active helps a lot.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Jose

May 12, 2018, 2:58 am

I took Olanzapine for almost three months. I started on 10 mg the first month, then 20 mg on the second month and 30 mg on the third month. The drug did stop my Racing Thoughts, but it had a lot of side effects so I told my nurse that I wanted to quit the treatment.

She lowered it from 30 mg to 20 mg again. I took 20 mg for four more days and then I stopped cold turkey on April 11 and ever since then I haven't been able to sleep on my own, I spent 29 days from April 11 to May 10 without any sleep, not even for a couple of minutes.

I started sleeping on May 10 because my nurse prescribe me Trazodone so it worked and slept like 8 or 10 hours yesterday. I also still have constipation, dry mouth and lack of sex drive. How long will this last?

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Roger

May 2, 2018, 5:05 am

I initially took 5mg and then doctors increased the dose to 10mg. I took it for about a year and quit cold turkey because this was not the thing I needed, I have social anxiety and not schizophrenia or bipolar. After quitting I had terrible side effects, life was literally hell.

I feel like I have paid for all my sins with this experience. Chest pain, dizziness, insomnia, muscle spasms, sweating, dry mouth, headache, difficulty speaking and swallowing, muscle tension, tiredness, anxiety, depression, and a daily desire to die.

Now, after two years, I feel better, although not fully recovered. I am still dizzy all the time, I have sleeping problems and mood changes, anxiety and depression although much milder. Don't take this drug, it won't help you with your disease, it is basically a chemical lobotomy.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Goca

April 26, 2018, 12:54 am

Hell to all. This is my second post after almost 2 months. I have bipolar disorder and I had terrible olanzapine withdrawal symptoms. I just want to let you know that my condition has been improved, I would say 85%. I believe that exercise and Omega 3 helped me a lot.

I exercise 45 minutes, 5 days a week (aerobic, zumba, weight training- every day is different), also I walk between half an hour and hour every day. I take Alaskan Salmon Whole Fish Oil – 2x1200mg softgels- one has 90 mg omega 3.

All fatigue, restlessness and nausea are mild now. I take 4 mg Nozinan for sleep and my sleep is really good like natural. I plan to decrease Nozinan to 2 mg next month and maybe to stop in 3-4 months.

Conclusion: All olanzapine withdrawal symptoms will pass, it just takes time. Hold on.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Greg

April 29, 2018, 8:25 pm

Congratulations. I've been off Zyprexa for 8 weeks. Last week was the first time I've seen any improvement. My intense anxiety disappeared for 2 days the came back yesterday, then gone again today.

My sleep still sucks eggs. Zero sleep the past 2 days. Still have the nausea and headache. I'm looking forward to the day when I can report that my symptoms are gone. It's been rough. I want people to hear people's positive stories rather than just the horror stories.

Again, way to hang in there. Please report back when you feel 100% and let people now how long it took.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Allison

July 9, 2018, 4:51 am

What sort of dose are you withdrawing from, and how long had you been taking this medication? Did you taper off? Do you have a doc supervising this cessation?

This is a nasty neuroleptic and withdrawal is best accomplished with medical supervision. If your doc won't help you withdraw, find one who will support you in getting this poison out of your system!

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Debra

April 22, 2018, 4:45 am

I am going off Zyprexa and it is hell. When I do sleep I have terrible dreams. Panic attacks, crying, nausea, insomnia. I'm awake but I feel like I'm not. This is the worst time ever.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Greg

April 15, 2018, 7:43 pm

I was on Zyprexa for 15 years. I'm bipolar with anxiety disorder. My body kept building up a tolerance and I got up as high as 30mg/day. I initially gained 50 lbs because I got really lethargic. However, I took the weight off by diet and exercise. The exercise also helped reduce my blood/sugar, high cholesterol as well as high liver panels.

My Dr decided to take me off Zyprexa since I built up a high tolerance. Initially we dropped the dose by 10% and I got withdrawals. My Dr said to go ahead and halve the dose every two weeks. After my first reduction, the hell started within 2 days. I went all the ways down to 0.625mg/day. Once I took my last dose 6 weeks ago today, the withdrawals got really bad.

My Dr gave me Ambien for the Insomnia and Valium for the anxiety. I quit taking the Valium because I've had to go through a Benzo withdrawal before which wasn't fun either. The Valium did nothing for the anxiety or sleep. I've been on Ambien before and weaning off those isn't that hard. Zyprexa withdrawals are the absolute worst thing.

At week 4 my symptoms got worse and have stayed that way. I have really bad anxiety, only sleep 2-3 hours using Ambien, no energy or interest in things, night sweats, fast pulse, nausea, and always feel like I need to sleep. The top of my head burns and feels like there's a lot of pressure.

My anxiety is the worst in the morning until about noon. I go and swim a mile Mon-Fri. That's helps tremendously. Especially with the anxiety. After I swim until I go to bed, I feel a lot better. That lasts until I wake up at midnight or 1 am. Then the cycle starts again.

People will say to titrate slow. However, when I did my first reduction, I got the same withdrawal symptoms as when I dropped by 50%. I figured why prolong the agony. I know this is going to take awhile. As others have said, it's mind over matter. Exercise

is the key for me to get through this.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Liam

April 22, 2018, 8:08 am

Did you successfully get off of this and restore your sleep to normal?

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Greg

April 23, 2018, 11:58 am

I've been off Zyprexa over 7 weeks now with zero improvement. If anything, things are worse. I'm stopping the Ambien because it doesn't help. Last week my doctor put me on Trazodone to help with the sleep. I've had a couple of nights where I've slept about 5-6 hours, but the hangover from Trazodone is a nightmare in itself.

I feel worse than not sleeping at all which adds to the frustration. I'm only taking 25mg of the Trazodone. I was on a high dose of Zyprexa for a long time. I honestly don't see things getting better anytime soon. I'm going to hang in there. It is the worst I've ever felt but I won't give in and have to do this all over again. I'm too far along.

Drugs like Zyprexa have their place. It definitely helped me feel better for a few years. However, it's come at a high cost. The internet can be a dangerous place. All we read are the horror stories because the people writing them are miserable going through this.

I'm sure there's a lot of people with success getting off Zyprexa. We just don't get to read about it because if they've done it, why write about it? These people just move on. Good luck to everyone.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Heather

May 1, 2018, 7:42 pm

I still check in every once in a while. I was only on zyprexa for 1 month at 2.5mg. Was taken off c/t and switched to a different med for my migraines. Never knew what withdrawal was until two weeks after my last dose, and I've been on a lot of different types of medications to try to control my chronic migraines.

I never want to go through anything like that again. It was horrible and I was put on a benzo to help with the outrageous anxiety (I'd NEVER had anxiety before). Now I'm working through tapering slowly off of the benzo. I did try trazodone instead of klonopin but it made me feel horrible.

I don't think the klonopin really has helped much but now I'm on it just so that I don't have withdrawals. My GP also added an AD that's been known to help migraines and what do you know, it's the one medication that has actually helped. Still working on the right dose so I'm not touching the benzo right now.

I did start to feel better at week seven off of zyprexa and had I not been going through the add of an AD and benzo, I think that I'd be at 99% right now. My sleep is not amazing, but I can now fall back to sleep if I wake up in the middle of the night.

I generally go to bed around 11 and wake up about 5am. Much improved from the 1-2 hours of sleep I got when in withdrawal. Oh, I also take 1.5mg of melatonin.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

Allison

July 9, 2018, 5:03 am

"Drugs like Zyprexa have their place." – This "med" needs to be resigned to the depths of Hell. It's poison. Eli-Lilly has settlement in the BILLIONS OF DOLLARS over the fallout from this "medication" – weight gain, diabetes, heart disease, never mind that it's just nasty from the outset.

My docs failed to inform me as to how addictive Olanzapine is and the symptoms resulting from withdrawal. Several docs have advised me that there is no medication available to treat Olanzapine withdrawal.

[REPLY](#) [LINK](#)

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