

# Brightside Specialty Pharmacy

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## Patient Education for

### ALPRAZOLAM 1 MG TABLET



May be habit forming. Tolerance may develop with prolonged use. Not recommended during pregnancy or breast feeding. Avoid taking with other CNS depressant drugs or alcohol. Many drug-drug interactions possible with this drug. May cause drowsiness or dizziness. Use caution driving. Check with doctor before increasing dose or frequency. Discuss gradual dose reduction with MD before stopping medication.

May be habit forming. Call doctor if medicine doesn't seem to work. Do not take while breast feeding or when pregnant. Avoid alcohol/other drugs that make you sleepy. Review all drugs you are taking with your doctor. May make you drowsy or dizzy. Drive with caution. Call Dr before increasing dose or frequency. MD may need to reduce the dose before you stop it.

#### .....Education Section.....

#### **IMPORTANT:**

**HOW TO USE THIS INFORMATION:** This is a summary and

does NOT have all possible information about this product. This information does not assure that this product is safe, effective, or appropriate for you. This information is not individual medical advice and does not substitute for the advice of your health care professional. Always ask your health care professional for complete information about this product and your specific health needs.

ALPRAZOLAM - ORAL

(al-PRA-zoe-lam)

#### **COMMON BRAND NAME(S):**

Xanax

#### **WARNING:**

Alprazolam has a risk for abuse and addiction, which

can lead to overdose and death. Taking this medication with alcohol or other drugs that can cause drowsiness or breathing problems (especially opioid medications such as codeine, hydrocodone) may cause very serious side effects, including death. To lower your risk, your doctor should have you take the smallest dose of alprazolam that works, and take it for the shortest possible time. Be sure you know how to take alprazolam and what other drugs you should avoid taking with it. See also Drug Interactions section. Get medical help right away if any of these very serious side effects occur: slow/shallow breathing, unusual lightheadedness, severe drowsiness/dizziness, difficulty waking up.

Suddenly stopping this medication may cause serious (possibly fatal) withdrawal, especially if you have used it for a long time or in high doses. To prevent withdrawal, your doctor may lower your dose slowly. Tell your doctor or pharmacist right away if you have any withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, trouble sleeping, restlessness, hallucinations/confusion, depression, nausea, or seizures. Withdrawal symptoms may sometimes last weeks to months.

#### **USES:**

Alprazolam is used to treat anxiety and panic disorders.

It belongs to a class of medications called benzodiazepines which act on the brain and nerves (central nervous system) to produce a calming effect. It works by enhancing the effects of a certain natural chemical in the body (GABA).

#### **HOW TO USE:**

See also Warning section.

Read the Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist before you start taking alprazolam and each time you get a refill. If you have any questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Take this medication by mouth as directed by your doctor. Dosage is based on your medical condition, age, and response to treatment. Your dose may be gradually increased until the drug starts working well. Follow your doctor's instructions closely to reduce the risk of side effects.

Though it helps many people, this medication may sometimes cause addiction. This risk may be higher if you have a substance use disorder (such as overuse of or addiction to drugs/alcohol). Take this medication exactly as prescribed to lower the risk of addiction. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more details.

When this medication is used for a long time, it may not work as well. Talk with your doctor if this medication stops working well.

Tell your doctor if your condition lasts or gets worse.

#### **SIDE EFFECTS:**

See also Warning section.

Drowsiness, dizziness, increased saliva production, or change in sex drive/ability may occur. If any of these effects last or get worse, tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly.

To minimize dizziness and lightheadedness, get up slowly when rising from a seated or lying position.

Remember that this medication has been prescribed because your doctor has judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

Tell your doctor right away if any of these unlikely but serious side effects occur: mental/mood changes (such as hallucinations, thoughts of suicide), trouble speaking, loss of coordination, trouble walking, memory problems.

Get medical help right away if these rare but very serious side effects occur: yellowing eyes or skin, seizures.

A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is rare.

However, get medical help right away if you notice any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including: rash, itching/swelling (especially of the face/tongue/throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing.

This is not a complete list of possible side effects. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

In the US -

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or at [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch).

In Canada - Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to Health Canada at 1-866-234-2345.

#### **PRECAUTIONS:**

Before taking alprazolam, tell your doctor or

pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to other benzodiazepines (such as diazepam, lorazepam); or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain inactive ingredients, which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Talk to your pharmacist for more details.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: severe lung/breathing problems (such as COPD, sleep apnea), liver disease, kidney disease, personal or family history of a substance use disorder (such as overuse of or addiction to drugs/alcohol), glaucoma.

This drug may make you dizzy or drowsy. Alcohol or marijuana (cannabis) can make you more dizzy or drowsy. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that needs alertness until you can do it safely. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Talk to your doctor if you are using marijuana (cannabis).

Before having surgery, tell your doctor or dentist about all the products you use (including prescription drugs, nonprescription drugs, and herbal products).

Older adults may be more sensitive to the side effects of this drug, especially loss of coordination and drowsiness. These side effects can increase the risk of falling.

During pregnancy, this medication should be used only when clearly needed. It may harm an unborn baby. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. Babies born to mothers who have used this drug late in the last 3 months of pregnancy may develop unusual sleepiness, feeding/breathing difficulties, muscle shakiness, or constant crying. If you notice any unusual symptoms in your newborn, tell the doctor right away.

This drug passes into breast milk and may have undesirable effects on a nursing infant. Breast-feeding while using this drug is not recommended. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

#### **DRUG INTERACTIONS:**

See also Warning section.

Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all

the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval.

Some products that may interact with this drug include: kava, sodium oxybate.

Other medications can affect the removal of alprazolam from your body, which may affect how alprazolam works. Examples include azole antifungals (such as itraconazole, ketoconazole), cimetidine, certain anti-depressants (such as fluoxetine, fluvoxamine, nefazodone), drugs to treat HIV (delavirdine, protease inhibitors such as indinavir), macrolide antibiotics (such as erythromycin), rifamycins (such as rifabutin), St. John's wort, drugs used to treat seizures (such as phenytoin), among others.

The risk of serious side effects (such as slow/shallow breathing, severe drowsiness/dizziness) may be increased if this medication is taken with other products that may also cause drowsiness or breathing problems. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other products such as opioid pain or cough relievers (such as codeine, hydrocodone), alcohol, marijuana (cannabis), other drugs for sleep or anxiety (such as diazepam, lorazepam, zolpidem), muscle relaxants (such as carisoprodol, cyclobenzaprine), or antihistamines (such as cetirizine, diphenhydramine).

Check the labels on all your medicines (such as allergy or cough-and-cold products) because they may contain ingredients that cause drowsiness. Ask your pharmacist about using those products safely.

Cigarette smoking decreases blood levels of this medication. Tell your doctor if you smoke or if you have recently stopped smoking.

#### **OVERDOSE:**

If someone has overdosed and has serious symptoms such

as passing out or trouble breathing, call 911. Otherwise, call a poison control center right away. US residents can call their local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. Canada residents can call a provincial poison control center. Symptoms of overdose may include: severe drowsiness, slowed/reduced reflexes, slowed breathing, loss of consciousness.

#### **NOTES:**

Do not share this medication with others. Sharing it is

against the law.

Laboratory and/or medical tests (such as liver function tests) should be performed periodically to monitor your progress or check for side effects. Consult your doctor for more details.

#### **MISSED DOSE:**

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you

remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose. Take your next dose at the regular time. Do not double the dose to catch up.

#### **STORAGE:**

Store at room temperature away from light and moisture.

Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medications away from children and pets.

Do not flush medications down the toilet or pour them into a drain unless instructed to do so. Properly discard this product when it is expired or no longer needed. Consult your pharmacist or local waste disposal company for more details.

Information last revised April 2022.

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