



Not What the Doctor Ordered

Downers. The name itself is unexciting. Why would people be attracted to a drug that takes them down? Imagine that crazy drug deal:

"Hey! Ya' too happy? Got too much energy? Take some of these. They'll really bring you down!"

"Gee thanks, Mister!"

When someone first takes one of these drugs, there is a small window of time when they feel "euphoric" (happy and confident.) But that window of time is extremely short. It doesn't take long before the high is over. The downer abuser is shut out of the good times and left with only pain and addiction.

What are prescription "downers"?

They are sedative-hypnotics, pain medications, or tranquilizers. Even more specific: barbiturates, benzodiazepines, and opioid analgesics. Their medical uses are for relief of insomnia, anxiety, seizures, and extreme pain.

So, how do people get hooked?

Oh, maybe someone breaks a leg and gets prescription pain medication. The pills last longer than the pain does, but he keeps on taking the pills anyway for that "euphoric" feeling. Or maybe

someone else gets some tranquilizers for an anxiety disorder and then shares a couple of pills with her friend "just for fun." Either way, the end result can be a serious, life-threatening addiction to the pain medication or tranquilizer.

Addiction to any drug is terrible, but addiction to prescription "downers" has special dangers. Breaking an addiction to downers is so difficult and dangerous, doctors say people shouldn't even try to quit without medical help!

Downers take abusers down and out. Deaths from overdose or drug mixing are common, permanent health damage can easily occur with abuse, and lives are destroyed, just like with any drug problem.

Prescription Abuse Data

www.intheknowzone.com/scripts/stats/

For More Information

Go to www.intheknowzone.com

for an extension of this pamphlet.

Increase your knowledge using the information, statistics, images, and links.

Test your understanding with a quick quiz.



Don't stay in the dark.
Get In the Know!

Tranquilizers and Painkillers *down and out*



SAMPLE COPY

In the know

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About Tranquilizers

Barbiturates and Benzodiazepines induce sleep, relieve anxiety, and treat seizure disorders. They are extremely addictive and overdosing on them is terribly easy. Sometimes abusers become confused under the influence, forget how much they have taken, take more, and die. Many end up in long-lasting comas. Drinking alcohol while taking barbiturates is like buying a ticket to the morgue.

Images of Tranquilizers

www.intheknowzone.com/scripts/bbpix/

Names of Barbiturates and Benzodiazepines

Some common names of barbiturates are secobarbital (Seconal® or Tuinal®), pentobarbital (Nembutal®), amobarbital (Amytal®), and phenobarbital (Luminal®).

Some common names of benzodiazepines are clonazepam (Klonopin®), clordiazepoxide (Librium®), diazepam (Valium®), clorazepate (Tranxene®), alprazolam (Xanax®), and triazolam (Halcion®).



What are their street names?

Barbiturates are sometimes called Barbs, Downers, Sleepers, Stumblers, Yellow Jackets, Red Dolls, Tootsies, or Rainbows.

Benzodiazepines are sometimes called BZDs, Benzos, Goofballs, Heavenly Blues, Qual, Robital, Stupefy, Tranx, or Valley Girl (for Valium®).

How do they work biologically?

Barbiturates and benzodiazepines are both depressants. They depress or slow down function in various areas of the brain.

Barbiturates effect sleep, attention, integration of the senses, and maintenance of blood pressure and body temperature.

Benzodiazepines act on the areas of the brain that control thought processes, memory, movement control, muscle tone, and balance.

Tranquilizers in the Brain

www.intheknowzone.com/scripts/bbaddict/

Effects of Tranquilizer Abuse

Some of the effects of barbiturate and benzodiazepine abuse are:

- Sleepiness and deep sleep.
- Slurred speech.
- Poor coordination and falling.
- Poor thought processes and comprehension.
- Memory and judgment difficulty.
- Mood swings.
- Involuntary jerking of the eyes.
- Constricted pupils.
- Slowed breathing rate.
- Addiction.
- Death if combined with alcohol.
- Possible overdose, leading to death.

About Opioid Painkillers

Opioid analgesics are powerful painkillers with sedative effects.

They treat severe pain from surgery, injuries, chronic pain conditions, or terminal illnesses like cancer.

Opioids are derived from opium, which is extracted from the seedpod of a particular kind of poppy plant.



All opioid drugs, including morphine and heroin, are tremendously addictive. Abusers are so addicted they've been known to threaten suicide or commit violent crimes to get the drugs.

Images of Opioids

www.intheknowzone.com/scripts/opioidpix/

What are opioid analgesics called?

Some common names of opioid analgesics are hydrocodone (Vicodin® or Lortab®), oxycodone (OxyContin®, Percodan®, or Percocet®), propoxyphene (Darvocet®), meperidine (Demerol®) and codeine or medicines containing codeine. On the street, they might be called Percs, Oxy, or dope.



How do opioids work biologically?

Opioid drugs bind rapidly to opioid receptors, and change the limbic system in the brain, which controls emotions. Then they block pain messages from the spinal cord to the body. Opioids also slow automatic body functions like breathing, heart rate, and digestion.

Opioids in the Brain

www.intheknowzone.com/scripts/opaddict/

Effects of Painkiller Abuse

Some of the effects of abusing opioid analgesics are:

- Temporary sense of well-being.
- Lack of interest or depression.
- Drowsiness.
- Light-headedness.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Drooling or nodding.
- Constipation.
- Flushing of the skin.
- Itchy skin or skin rash.
- Depressed breathing.
- Addiction.
- Liver or pancreas damage.
- Possible overdose leading to death.



Rx for Life!

Tranquilizers and painkillers are effective if you need them, but they are a prescription for disaster if you don't. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully, and never share any prescription with anyone else. If someone offers you a prescription drug, try a simple "No, thanks." If the person keeps pushing, beat a path to the exit. Someone pushing drugs on you is someone you don't need to be around.

STAMPED OUT