

2003

Potential Adverse Consequences of Benzodiazepines in Older Adults

University of Maine Center on Aging

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Potential Adverse Consequences of Benzodiazepines in Older Adults



Neuropsychological Adverse Effects

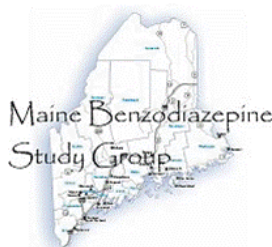
- *Cognitive Impairment*
 - memory deficits
 - past use of BZDs associated with increased risk of dementia
 - chronic use associated with higher risk of global cognitive decline
- *Central Nervous System Depression*
- *Daytime Drowsiness*
- *Psychomotor Impairment*
 - increased risk of falls and hip fracture, especially with long-term use
 - increased risk of motor vehicle accidents
 - greater risks with high-dose and long-acting BZDs
 - greater risks in first two weeks of use

Physiological & Psychological Dependence

- *When taken chronically, pharmacodynamic tolerance to sedative effects*

Withdrawal Symptoms

- *Confusion*
- *Rebound Insomnia*
- *Agitation, Anxiety, and Dysphoria*



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