Anti-anxiety – Benzodiazepines

Specific medications:
- Alprazolam (Xanax)
- Diazepam (Valium)
- Chlorazepate (Tranxene)
- Lorazepam (Ativan)
- Chloridiazepoxide (Librium)
- Temazepam (Restoril)
- Clonazepam (Klonopin)

Use:
- Treat panic disorder and anxiety
- Treatment of insomnia

Risks and side effects:
- Sedation, fatigue, drowsiness, dizziness when standing
- Poor muscle coordination, decreased attention
- Loss of bladder control
- Physical dependence and addiction
- Depressed mood
- Rebound anxiety
- Respiratory depression

Though most medication side effects are not dangerous, they can rarely be medically serious or even life threatening. Let your doctor know if you notice any changes in your health.

Expected onset of action: Benzodiazepines generally begin to work within 30 minutes to an hour after taking the medication by mouth. Do not take them immediately before driving or other activities that require you to be alert in order to be safe.

Use in pregnancy: Some of these medications are known to cause birth defects. Use birth control while taking these medications. Let your doctor know if you may be or wish to become pregnant.

Interactions with other drugs and food: Street drugs and alcohol should be avoided while taking these medications. Mixing benzodiazepines and alcohol can be lethal.

Laboratory monitoring: Laboratory monitoring is generally not necessary. Your doctor may recommend you get an EKG while taking these medications.

Discontinuation effects: If these medications are stopped suddenly, you may experience anxiety, rapid heart rate, restlessness, or insomnia. In rare cases, suddenly stopping these medications can cause withdrawal seizures that can be lethal. All these effects can be avoided by tapering the medication slowly. Always speak with your doctor before stopping a medication.

I acknowledge that I have discussed this information with my doctor and have received a copy of this form for my records.

Individual Served: __________________________ Date: __________________

Physician: __________________________ Date: ________________

[ ] Copy given for guardian