

## What is this medicine for?

This medicine belongs to a group known as benzodiazepines.

It can be used for **short-term treatment** of insomnia (trouble in sleeping) and anxiety. It may also be used to control symptoms of acute alcohol withdrawal.

The medicine may also be used for other conditions, check with your doctor.

## Before using this medicine:

Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had alcohol or drug abuse; lung, brain, liver or kidney disease; sleep apnoea; glaucoma; myasthenia gravis; or seizures (fits).

**FOR WOMEN: Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.**

## How to use this medicine?

Take this medicine only as directed by your doctor. If you feel that the medicine is not working well, do not take more than the prescribed dose. Do consult your doctor.

You should obtain this medicine from the same doctor or clinic wherever possible.

## Precautions while taking this medicine:

- This medicine may make you drowsy or less alert. Do not drive or operate machinery if affected. Avoid alcohol as it can add to the drowsiness.
- This medicine may be **habit-forming** (unconscious regularity in taking), leading to the development of dependence on taking it, especially when taken for a long time or in high doses. It may also become less effective with long term or excessive use.

Dependence on this medicine can be prevented when it is taken for short-term (between 2 to 4 weeks) at the lowest effective dose, and taken intermittently (for example, 1 night in 2 or 3 nights) for the relief of anxiety or insomnia.

- Common benzodiazepine withdrawal reactions MAY include sweating, increased heart rate, tremors, trouble sleeping, increased agitation, hallucinations, increased anxiety, nausea or vomiting. Severe withdrawal reactions include medical emergencies such as fits.
- To prevent severe withdrawal symptoms, consult your doctor on a discontinuation plan to cut down the dose slowly over a few weeks. If you are prescribed this medicine for a specific medical condition such as epilepsy (fits), consult your doctor or specialist for further advice about the appropriate dose and duration.
- When you take this medicine with some other medicines, it may affect how they work. Be sure that you tell all doctors, pharmacists, dentists and other health care providers who treat you about all medicines and natural remedies you are taking.

## What should I do if I forget a dose?

If you are directed by your doctor to take this medicine regularly, take the missed dose right away if you remember within an hour or so of the missed dose. However, if you do not remember until later, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule.

**Do not take two doses at the same time to make up for a missed one.**

## Possible Side Effects

Like all medications, this medication may also cause some POSSIBLE side effects in some people. Everyone responds differently to medications; so not everyone experiences any or all of them.

### **COMMON (Generally affect up to 10% of patients)**

***Most of these side effects below will get better or go away completely with continued medication taking as your body gets used to this medication. Contact your doctor or pharmacist should they become too bothersome to you.***

- ~ Drowsiness
- ~ Dizziness or light-headedness
- ~ Clumsiness or unsteadiness
- ~ Nausea

## **FOR URGENT ATTENTION**

**Check with your doctor as soon as possible if you have any of the following:**

- ~ Allergic reactions such as skin rash/ itching, swelling of the eyes/ face/ lips, or difficulty in breathing
- ~ Memory loss of recent events
- ~ Abnormal thinking or changes in behaviour, such as unusual excitement, nervousness, irritability or agitation
- ~ Unusual behaviour or activities while partially asleep, such as sleepwalking.
- ~ Confusion
- ~ Fast, slow or irregular heartbeat
- ~ Problems with eyesight
- ~ Severe muscle weakness

**If you have any concerns about your medications or if you have other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, please consult with your doctor or pharmacist.**

## **Where should I store the medicine?**

Store this medicine at room temperature, away from direct light, heat and moisture (not in the bathroom) and out of reach of children.

Throw away any medication that is expired or no longer needed.

***Do not share the medicine with other people.***

***Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information or if you have any questions.***

### **Institute of Mental Health**

#### **Pharmacy Department**

10 Buangkok View

Singapore 539747

*For medication enquiries: (during office hours)*

IMH Clinic B/ Sayang Wellness Pharmacy: 63892077

IMH Clinic C (NAMS) Pharmacy: 63893666

Community Wellness Centre Pharmacy: 64715797

Geylang Behavioural Medicine Pharmacy: 67461724

Child Guidance Clinic (HPB) Pharmacy: 64353807

Child Guidance (Sunrise Wing) Pharmacy: 63892410

Email: [enquiry@imh.com.sg](mailto:enquiry@imh.com.sg)



*Patient Information Leaflet on*

## **Benzodiazepines :**

**ALPRAZOLAM**

**CLONAZEPAM**

**DIAZEPAM**

**LORAZEPAM**