

# Valium (diazepam)



## What is it usually prescribed for?

Anxiety disorders, symptoms of anxiety (short-term), acute alcohol withdrawal, and other conditions.



## How does it work?

Valium helps control feelings of fear or worry, agitation, and tremor. Valium is thought to boost the brain chemical GABA.



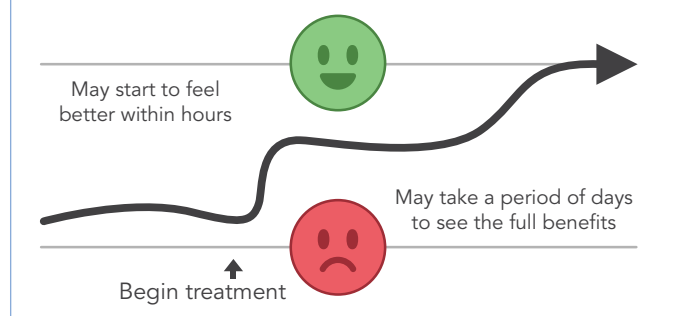
## What should I expect?

It may take a few days for you to feel the full benefits of taking this medicine. Feelings of fear or worry may improve within hours or over a period of days. Valium is usually used for short periods of time only. Long-term use can cause sedation and falls.

Your healthcare professional will use the lowest dose that works for you. Tell your healthcare professional how it's working for you and if you have any side effects so the dose can be changed if needed.

Take Valium exactly as prescribed to get the full benefit of this medicine.

### WHEN WILL I FEEL BETTER?



## Will I have side effects?

You may or may not have side effects when taking Valium. Most side effects improve as you continue to take this medicine.

Valium can produce emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction) even when used as prescribed. Physical dependence may develop after two or more weeks of daily use. Keep your Valium prescription safe to prevent misuse and abuse.

## What are common side effects and what can I do to feel better?

If your side effects are mild, talk to your healthcare professional about them at your next appointment.

	Drink plenty of water	Drink less alcohol	Healthcare professional suggestion
Feeling dizzy	X	X	
Feeling drowsy	X	X	
Dry mouth	X	X	
Feeling unsteady		X	

Note: This is not a complete list of side effects; other side effects are possible. Before starting Valium, tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you are taking to avoid unexpected side effects.



Neuroscience Education Institute

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## YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

In 2019, Valium was prescribed over 5.7 million times in the United States.






## What should I avoid?

Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional first. There are many interactions with medicines that may increase your chance of side effects.

Do not suddenly stop taking Valium unless your healthcare professional has told you to, because it can cause nausea, headache, irritability, and other negative feelings.

Use less alcohol and recreational drugs. They may decrease the benefits of Valium and increase the chance of side effects. Alcohol increases the chance of accidental overdose. Drugs like heroin and other opioids lead to slowed or difficulty breathing and death.

## WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

-  This medicine can produce emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction)
-  Tell your healthcare professional about any troubling side effects so that you can work together to address them
-  Do not suddenly stop taking this medicine unless told to do so by your healthcare professional
-  Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional
-  Get medical care right away if you have serious side effects



## When should I call a healthcare professional right away or visit the emergency room?

If you have any **serious** side effects. Here are some examples of serious side effects:

- Thoughts of suicide or hurting yourself
- Weak or shallow breathing
- Feeling like you might pass out
- Confusion, hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there)
- Fear, worry, panic attacks, trouble sleeping
- Hyperactivity, agitation, aggression
- Unusual risk-taking behavior
- New or worsening seizures (convulsions)

If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center (800-222-1222) or get medical care right away.



## Where can I get more help?

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – [nami.org](https://www.nami.org)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line – Text “HELLO” to 741741



## Notes and questions for my next appointment

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