# ALPRAZOLAM

*al-pra-zoh-lam*

## What does it do?

*Alprazolam* is used to treat anxiety. It is also sometimes used for other conditions.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have liver problems, sleep apnoea, or a head injury.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

## How should you take it?

Take *alprazolam* as directed with a glass of water.

## What if you forget a dose?

Take the missed dose if you remember on the same day. If not, skip the dose and carry on as normal. Do not take two doses at the same time.

## Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *alprazolam* including:

- some antihistamines (may be in anti-allergy, anti-nausea and cough/cold medicines)
- fluconazole (e.g. Diflucan®) or miconazole (e.g. Daktarin Oral Gel®)

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort, valerian) or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Slow or shallow breathing, hard to wake up<br>Trouble with speech or swallowing | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Mood changes, agitation, unusual behaviour or thinking, loss of coordination, confusion, memory loss, trouble concentrating<br>Muscle weakness | Tell your doctor |
| Drowsiness, tiredness, dizziness, headache, changes in vision<br>Dry mouth, stomach upset<br>Less interest in sex, trouble peeing | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- *Alprazolam* can impair your ability to do tasks such as driving or using machines. Alcohol makes this worse. Discuss your risk with your health professional. (search NZTA - Are you safe to drive?)
- If you still feel sleepy the next day, do not drive or operate machinery.
- *Alprazolam* may be addictive with long-term use.
- If you have been taking *alprazolam* regularly for a long time, do not stop taking it suddenly without talking to your doctor.
- Sleep problems commonly occur when *alprazolam* is stopped. It may take several weeks for these to improve.
- Caffeine-containing drinks (e.g. coffee, cola, tea) may reduce the effect of *alprazolam*. Discuss with your doctor.