Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

DIAZEPAM (oral)

dye-az-eh-pam

What does it do?

Diazepam is used to treat anxiety or muscle spasms, or to help you sleep. 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 *diazepam* 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 *diazepam* including:

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

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 Trouble with speech or swallowing	Tell your doctor immediately
Mood changes, agitation, unusual behaviour or thinking, loss of coordination, confusion, memory loss, trouble concentrating Muscle weakness	Tell your doctor
Drowsiness, dizziness, tiredness, headache, changes in vision Dry mouth, stomach upset 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:

- *Diazepam* 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.
- *Diazepam* may be addictive with long-term use.
- If you have been taking *diazepam* regularly for a long time, do not stop taking it suddenly without talking to your doctor.
- Sleep problems commonly occur when *diazepam* is stopped. It may take several weeks for these to improve.
- Caffeine-containing drinks (e.g. coffee, cola, tea) may reduce the effect of *diazepam*. Discuss with your doctor.
- Grapefruit, grapefruit juice or sour/Seville oranges may react with *diazepam*. Discuss with your pharmacist.