



Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines (benzos) are substances that calm the nervous system. They can be prescribed to help with sleep problems and anxiety. Benzodiazepines have been cut (mixed) into the unregulated drug supply in Ottawa. This can increase the risk of overdose. Learn how to respond to an overdose: OttawaPublicHealth.ca/Benzos.

Signs of benzodiazepine intoxication:

- Extreme sleepiness or passing out
- Dizziness, poor balance, and poor movement control
- Slurred speech
- Memory loss or “blackouts”
- Loss of consciousness

Be aware that:

The effects of benzodiazepines can last for hours. Call 9-1-1 right away if you think someone is overdosing and stay with them until help arrives.

Naloxone does not work on benzodiazepines. Naloxone can only temporarily reverse the effects of an **opioid** overdose.

Naloxone should still be used in a benzo-related overdose. Always give Naloxone to a person with symptoms of an overdose in case they have also taken an opioid.

Benzodiazepine intoxication can increase the risk of sexual violence. Symptoms like memory loss and passing out can put people at high risk for sexual violence.

Need Help?

- AccessMHA.ca offers mental health and substance use support services and care. They can refer you to the services you need from a network of partner organizations.
- The [Sexual Assault and Partner Abuse Care Program](#) offers care to people 16 and older who have experienced sexual or intimate partner violence. They provide services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at The Ottawa Hospital’s Civic Campus. The Sexual Assault and Partner Abuse Care Program number is **613-798-5555 extension 13770**.
- The [Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario](#) (CHEO) has a sexual assault program for children and adolescents. Contact the CHEO Emergency Department at **613-737-2328**.

Scan and go!

