

Xanax(R) Tablets

Alprazolam

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Xanax. It does not contain all the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking Xanax against the benefits this medicine is expected to have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with your medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What Xanax is used for

Xanax is used to treat anxiety.

Xanax is also used to treat panic attacks.

Your doctor may have prescribed Xanax for another purpose. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why Xanax has been prescribed for you.

Xanax belongs to a group of medicines called benzodiazepines. They are thought to work by their action on brain chemicals.

In general, benzodiazepines such as Xanax should be taken for short periods only (for example 2-4 weeks). Continuous long term use is not recommended unless advised by your doctor. The use of

benzodiazepines may lead to dependence on the medicine.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take Xanax

When you must not take it

Do not take Xanax if:

1. you have an allergy to benzodiazepines or any of the ingredients listed under Ingredients at the end of this leaflet.
2. you suffer from severe muscle weakness known as myasthenia gravis
3. you have severe and chronic lung disease.

Do not take Xanax if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

Do not take Xanax after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack.

Do not give Xanax to children unless advised by the child's doctor.

The safety and effectiveness of Xanax in children have not been established.

Before you start to take it

You must tell your doctor if:

1. **you have any allergies to any other medicines or any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes.**

2. **you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.**

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of taking Xanax during pregnancy.

3. **you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed.**

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of taking Xanax when breastfeeding.

4. **you have or have had any other medical conditions including:**

- * depression, psychosis or schizophrenia
- * suffering from fits or convulsions
- * liver, kidney or lung disease
- * glaucoma (high pressure in the eye)
- * myasthenia gravis (severe muscle weakness)

5. **You drink alcohol regularly.**

Alcohol may increase the effects of Xanax.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including medicines that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may affect how well Xanax works. These include:

- * sedatives (medicines used to produce calmness or to help you sleep)
- * medicines to control fits
- * antipsychotics (medicines used to treat certain mental and emotional conditions)
- * medicines for depression
- * muscle relaxants

- * antihistamines (medicines used to prevent or relieve the symptoms of allergy such as hay fever)
- * pain relievers
- * anaesthetics
- * cimetidine (a medicine used to treat reflux and ulcers)
- * disulfiram (a medicine used in the treatment of alcoholism)
- * antibiotics such as erythromycin
- * oral contraceptives
- * HIV protease inhibitors, medicines used to treat HIV infection.

These medicines may increase the effects of Xanax.

Xanax may affect some medicines or may affect how well they work.

These include:

- * antihistamines
- * medicines for depression
- * lithium (a medicine used to treat mood swings and some types of depression)
- * atropine and similar medicines

You may need different amounts of your medicine or you may need to take different medicines. Your doctor or pharmacist will have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while using Xanax.

How to take Xanax

How much to take

The dose of Xanax will be different for each person. Your doctor will decide the right dose for you.

When to take it

Your doctor will tell you how many times a day you should take your Xanax tablets. Xanax can be taken immediately after meals or on an empty stomach. However, side effects such as sleepiness or drowsiness may be reduced if you take your Xanax tablets immediately after meals.

How long to take it

Do not take Xanax for longer than your doctor says.

Usually Xanax should be used for short periods only (for example, 2-4 weeks). Continuous long term use is not recommended unless advised by your doctor. The use of benzodiazepines may lead to dependence on the medicine.

Continue taking Xanax for as long as your doctor recommends it.

If you forget to take Xanax

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to. Otherwise, take it as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking Xanax as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

If you are unsure about whether to take your next dose, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26) for advice, or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much Xanax.

Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning. Also report any other medicine or alcohol which has been taken. You may need urgent medical attention. Keep telephone numbers for these places handy.

While you are taking Xanax

Things you must do

Use Xanax exactly as your doctor has prescribed.

Tell all doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking Xanax.

If you feel that Xanax is not helping your condition, tell your doctor.

If you become pregnant while you are taking Xanax, tell your doctor.

Visit your doctor regularly.

Your doctor needs to check your progress and see whether you need to keep taking Xanax.

Always discuss with your doctor any problems or difficulties during or after taking Xanax.

If you are being treated for anxiety, be sure to discuss with your doctor any problems you may have and how you feel, especially if your anxiety attacks are getting worse or more frequent.

This will help your doctor to determine the best treatment for you.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken Xanax exactly as prescribed.

Otherwise your doctor may think that it was not effective and change your treatment unnecessarily.

Things you must not do

Do not drive or operate machinery until you know how Xanax affects you.

Xanax may cause drowsiness or dizziness in some people and therefore may affect alertness.

Even if you take Xanax at night, you may still be drowsy or dizzy the next day.

Do not take Xanax for a longer time than your doctor has prescribed.

Xanax should be taken for short periods only (for example 2 to 4 weeks), unless advised otherwise by your doctor.

Do not increase your dose of Xanax without first checking with your doctor.

Do not stop taking Xanax or lower the dose, without first checking with your doctor.

Stopping this medicine suddenly may cause some unwanted effects. You and your doctor will slowly reduce your dose of Xanax before you can stop taking it completely.

Do not suddenly stop taking Xanax if you suffer from epilepsy.

Stopping this medicine suddenly may make your epilepsy worse.

Do not take Xanax to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not give Xanax to anyone else, even if their symptoms seem similar to yours.

Things to be careful of

Be careful when drinking alcohol while taking Xanax.

Combining Xanax and alcohol can make you more sleepy, dizzy or lightheaded.

Your doctor may suggest that you avoid alcohol or reduce the amount of alcohol you drink while you are taking Xanax.

Be careful if you are elderly, unwell or taking other medicines.

Some people may experience side effects such as drowsiness, confusion, dizziness and unsteadiness, which may increase the risk of a fall.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you have any problems while taking Xanax, even if you do not think the problems are connected with the medicine or are not listed in this leaflet.

Like other medicines, Xanax can cause some side effects. If they occur, most are likely to be minor and temporary, generally occurring at the beginning of treatment and usually disappearing as treatment is continued or when the dosage is reduced. However, some may be serious and need medical attention.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you.

In patients treated for anxiety and anxiety associated with depression, the most common side effects to Xanax are:

- * drowsiness
- * dizziness
- * lightheadedness.

Less common side effects are: blurred vision, headache, depression, trouble sleeping, nervousness/anxiety, tremor, change in weight, memory problems, coordination problems, gastrointestinal and nervous system problems, stimulation, agitation, concentration difficulties, confusion, hallucinations, irritability, loss of appetite, problems with muscle tone, fatigue, slurred speech, yellowing of the skin and/or eyes, musculoskeletal weakness, changes in libido, irregular menstrual periods, incontinence, inability or difficulty passing urine and liver problems. Pressure in the eye is a rare side effect.

In patients treated for panic attacks, the most common side effects to Xanax are:

- * drowsiness
- * fatigue

- * clumsiness or unsteadiness
- * slurred speech.

Less common side effects are: mood changes, gastrointestinal problems, hormonal problems, skin rash, memory problems, sexual problems, intellectual problems and confusion. Yellowing of the skin and/or eyes or abnormal liver function and behavioural side effects such as manic behaviour or hypomania (feeling melancholy/depressed) occur rarely.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some patients. Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell when you are taking, or soon after you have finished taking Xanax.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.

After using Xanax

Storage

Keep your tablets in their blister pack or bottle until it is time to take them.

If you take the tablets out of the blister pack or bottle they may not keep well.

Keep your Xanax tablets in a cool dry place protected from light where the temperature stays below 30 degrees C (for the bottle) and below 25 degrees C (for the blister).

Do not store Xanax, or any other medicines, in a bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it in the car or on window sills. Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep your Xanax tablets where children cannot reach them.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking Xanax or the tablets have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any tablets left over.

Product description

What it looks like

Xanax tablets are available in 250 microgram, 500 microgram and 1 mg and 2 mg strengths.

Xanax 250 microgram tablets are white, scored, oval-shaped tablets marked "Upjohn 29". They are available blister packs of 50 tablets.

Xanax 500 microgram tablets are pink, scored, oval-shaped tablets marked "Upjohn 55". They are available in blister packs of 50 tablets.

Xanax 1 mg tablets are lilac, scored, oval-shaped tablets marked "Upjohn 90". They are available in blister packs of 50 tablets.

Xanax 2 mg tablets are white, tri-scored, capsule-shaped tablets marked with "U" and "94" on one side. They are available in bottles of 50 tablets.

Ingredients

The active ingredient in Xanax tablets is alprazolam.

Xanax tablets also contain lactose, microcrystalline cellulose, colloidal silica anhydrous, maize starch, docusate sodium with sodium benzoate, magnesium stearate, erythrosine CI 45430 (500 microgram and 1 mg tablet only) and indigo carmine CI 73015 (1 mg tablet only).

Identification

Xanax tablets can be identified by the Australian Register Number on the box:

250 microgram blister:

AUST R 62558

500 microgram blister:

AUST R 12352

1 mg blister: AUST R 12353

2 mg bottle: AUST R 53931

Supplier

Xanax tablets are supplied in Australia by:

Pfizer Australia Pty Ltd

ABN 50 008 422 348

38-42 Wharf Road

West Ryde NSW 2114

Australia

Toll Free number: 1800 675 229

This leaflet was revised in June 2007