

Talking with your Doctor



When you contact your doctor state that you would like to talk about cutting down or stopping benzos. If you would like to have a longer discussion with your doctor than a usual consult, ask for a long consult. A long consult is more expensive but it may be better.

Before your visit:

1. Make a list:

- symptoms experienced before starting benzos
- reasons for starting
- reasons for staying on benzos
- benefits of cutting down/stopping
- symptoms experienced while using them
- questions you would like to ask
- concerns you may have about your current health, medicines or benzo use
- other medicines you are taking
- any family medical history that may be important.

Remember to take notepad and pen.

At the doctor's office:

2. **Ask your most important questions** early in the visit. Your doctor will let you know if they can be answered today or if you will need a follow-up visit.
3. **Take notes** - write down what is said, to help you remember when you get home.
4. **Tell your doctor as much as you can** about your reasons for using benzos, your thoughts, and feelings about cutting down or stopping benzos, and anything that may affect your decision such as stresses at home or work.
5. **Ask your doctor whether** you would be able to trial cutting down or stopping benzos.
6. **Develop your cutting down plan.** Work out how many tablets you are going to take each day and when you are going to take them. Write it down on the **Cutting Down Guide**.

Ask for a written plan.

7. **Decide on a start date.** It is important that you have time to think about your reasons for cutting down before you start. It is also important to make sure you take all of your tablets every day.
8. **Ask if you don't understand** medical words or want more information.
9. **Ask whether there are any pamphlets** you could take home with you to read.
10. **Ask for additional information** or clarification if something is unclear for you.

Feeling overwhelmed? Please say so.

When you get home:

11. **Keep a diary.** Write down what you have learned, symptoms experienced and questions as they occur.

Too many questions? Too much information? Confused about how to cut down or stop? Feeling rushed to make a decision, or just anxious and emotional? Please let your doctor know what is making you feel uncomfortable so you can work together to make it better.

Remember: regular contact with your doctor is extremely important in helping you to cut down your benzos. If you are unable to work well with your doctor then think about going to another doctor.



Can I do this?