

# **Xanax**

Drug Name -- Xanax

Alternate Names – Alprazolam, Niravam

Manufacturer – Pfizer Pharmaceuticals

Type -- Prescription

Pregnancy Issues – Do not use if pregnant or nursing. This medication may cause birth defects.

Addiction Potential – Strong (dependency threshold indicated at 12 weeks by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals)

Maximum Prescription Duration – 12 weeks

Cautions – Do not take if you have asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), or other breathing problems, glaucoma, kidney or liver disease (especially alcoholic liver disease), a history of depression or suicidal thoughts or behavior or a history of drug or alcohol addiction. Do not eat grapefruit or grapefruit products while taking Xanax. This may have deadly effects.

Drug Interactions/Adverse affects – Not recommended for use with alcohol and other benzodiazepines; cold or allergy drugs; pain medicine; sleeping pills; muscle relaxers; medicine for seizures, depression, or anxiety; birth control pills; Sporanox, Tagamet, Tiazac, Cartia, Cardizem; IsonaRif, Rifamate; Darvon, Darvocet; Diflucan, Sporanox, or Nizoral; acetaminophen (Tylenol), or any SSRI antidepressant drugs. Do not use if allergic to Nizoral, Librium, Tranxene, Valium, Ativan, or Serax. [This list may not be complete. Consult with a pharmacist for complete information.]

Class -- Benzodiazepine

Purpose – Anxiety reduction, panic attack reduction, Generalized Anxiety Disorder treatment.

Side Effects – Inter-dose effects include heightened anxiety and panic attacks. Serious and moderately serious side effects include hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; unusual risk-taking behavior, decreased inhibitions, no fear of danger; depressed mood, thoughts of suicide or hurting yourself; hyperactivity, agitation, hostility, hallucinations; feeling light-headed, fainting; seizure (convulsions); urinating less than usual or not at all; muscle twitching, tremor; jaundice (yellowing of the skin eyes); amnesia or forgetfulness, trouble concentrating; sleep problems (insomnia); muscle weakness, lack of balance or coordination, slurred speech; blurred vision; and nausea, vomiting, constipation, appetite or weight changes.

Withdrawals – Seizures, heightened sensory perception, impaired concentration, confusion, dysosmia, clouded sensorium, paresthesias, muscle cramps, muscle twitch, diarrhea, blurred vision, appetite decrease, and weight loss. Other symptoms, such as anxiety and insomnia, were frequently seen during discontinuation (Pfizer documentation).

Sources – Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Drugs.com