

# adverse reactions/interactions

## ADDICTIVE PROPERTIES OF THE BENZODIAZEPINES MAY HAVE BEEN UNDER-RATED

An alcoholic who satisfactorily completed a 6-week alcohol withdrawal programme after consuming 2-3 bottles of whisky daily went on to become addicted to lorazepam. The case showed the danger of prescribing psychotropic drugs to recovered alcoholics. The 42-year-old man had received various tranquillisers before the treatment programme, and subsequently used lorazepam as he had alcohol. He took as many as eighty 2.5mg tablets in less than a day and withdrawal symptoms were precisely the same as with alcohol. He found it easy to obtain lorazepam from general practitioners.

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***'The addictive properties of benzodiazepines may have been underrated and there may well have to be a campaign on their use and restriction — a point underlined by my local underworld contacts telling me that diazepam 10mg tablets currently sell at no less than £1 each.'***

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Fox, R.: Lancet 2: 681 (23 Sep 1978)