

Patient information factsheet

Chlordiazepoxide

Why have I been started on chlordiazepoxide?

Chlordiazepoxide is a type of medicine called a benzodiazepine. It helps keep you comfortable while your body gets used to being alcohol free and will assist in trying to avoid serious complications.

What are the possible symptoms of alcohol withdrawal?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea/vomiting • Headaches • Excessive sweating • Tremors • Insomnia (problems sleeping) • Poor coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palpitations (heartbeats that suddenly become more noticeable) • Fever • Raised blood pressure • Agitation • Anxiety • Restlessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Disorientation • Increased confusion • Hallucinations • Delusions • Possible convulsions (fits)
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If you experience any of these symptoms while you are in hospital, please discuss it with your nurse or doctor.

What sort of side effects might I get if I am taking chlordiazepoxide?

Many people get:	A few people get:	A few people get:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness • Fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling unsteady on your feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • Confusion • Amnesia (forgetting things)

How long will I need to keep taking chlordiazepoxide for?

You will be given chlordiazepoxide while you are an inpatient in hospital. For alcohol withdrawal you will usually need to take it for between five and seven days, at a reduced dose each day. On very rare occasions, chlordiazepoxide will be prescribed for nine days and this will be discussed with you. You will be prescribed chlordiazepoxide starting at four times a day and this will be decreased over a few days. If your symptoms are not controlled, it is possible to offer you additional doses of medication as you need it. Please let your nurse know how you are feeling.

It's unlikely you will be sent home with a supply of chlordiazepoxide, so it's really important that you speak to your doctor or the alcohol care team about your options if you are discharged from hospital before completing the course. The alcohol care team are available from 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

There is a risk of becoming dependent on chlordiazepoxide. To minimise this risk, we only prescribe it for a few days. It's highly unlikely that you would be dependent after this short time.

Can I drink alcohol while I am taking chlordiazepoxide?

Alcohol can increase the sedative effects of chlordiazepoxide. You must not drink any alcohol if you are taking this medicine.

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Can I drive while taking chlordiazepoxide?

When taking chlordiazepoxide you must not drive as it can interfere with your ability to drive or operate machinery safely.

How and when should I take chlordiazepoxide?

You should take your medication as soon as it's administered to you by the nursing staff.

Further information

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss this medicine in more detail, please ask to speak to the ward pharmacist or the alcohol care team who can be contacted on telephone number **023 8120 5721**.

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