

'Fake benzos' are now widespread. What do you need to know?

What your dealer calls:

- 'benzos' / benzodiazepines
 - 'xannies' / Xanax / Kalma / Mylan / alprazolam
 - 'vallies' / Valium / diazepam (+ more!)
- ...may actually be dangerous 'fake benzos'.**



Fake benzos = higher risk of overdosing.

- If your benzos are not from an Australian pharmacy, they're probably counterfeit! The darknet or your dealer is no substitute for a prescription.
- Dealers make tablets, pills, 'bars', bottles and packs look real, but they can contain anything.
- One common substitute is etizolam, which is similar to Xanax in potency. But other substitutes may be much stronger or weaker. Duration can also vary.
- Pills next to each other in the same pack can differ in dose/strength. There could also be more 'filler' in one part of a pill.
- Reagent pill testing kits can't tell you the exact ingredients or dose.



Taking high doses and/or mixing benzos with other drugs is risky.

- Even low doses can lead to doing things you regret and blackouts.
- Risk of overdose is multiplied when mixing benzos with depressants such as opioids, alcohol, ketamine and GHB.
- Be careful if mixing with stimulants, dissociatives, anti-psychotics or anti-depressants.
- For more interactions, see: <https://www.dancewizenw.org.au/medications>
- Fake benzos may not be benzos, so watch out for complex interactions.



Benzos are easy to become dependent on. Help is available to withdraw safely. Don't rely on fake benzos.

- Physical and psychological dependence can happen quickly.
- Using regularly then stopping suddenly can be unpleasant and harmful, and may cause seizures, psychosis or death.
- Fake benzos vary in strength, so measuring and gradually lowering your dose is difficult.
- If you are dependent on fakes and need help withdrawing safely, a doctor can prescribe you real benzos.
- If you want non-judgemental support from an experienced member of the drug-using community, contact our NUA & DanceWize NSW PeerLine by calling 1800 644 413 or messaging us on social media.
- Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) (1800 250 015) run a 24/7 phone service and Web Chat offering confidential and anonymous counselling, referrals and information for individuals and concerned others.

To find out more about staying safe when using benzos visit:

- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/public-drug-alerts/Pages/counterfeit-alprazolam-july.aspx>
- <https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/a-z-of-drugs/Pages/benzodiazepines.aspx>
- <https://www.nuaa.org.au/peerline>