I Seek Your Guidance and Support

I would like to discuss my benzodiazepine prescription with you. I am concerned:

1. That I will be on these drugs for the rest of my life
2. About dependence, tolerance, and withdrawal
3. About tapering too quickly
4. That even with your oversight, I might not be permitted to take an active role in managing my withdrawal

I want to talk to you about evidence-based research which indicates:

1. Even at low dosages, physiologic dependence may develop in as little as 2-4 weeks\(^1\)
2. After 4 weeks of use, nearly half of patients will experience withdrawal upon cessation\(^2,3\)
3. 15-44\% experience moderate to severe symptoms upon withdrawal\(^3\)
4. Withdrawal symptoms can appear peculiar, such as light and sound sensitivity\(^4\)
5. Abrupt withdrawal is dangerous and more likely to result in a failed attempt at withdrawal\(^5\)
6. Withdrawal symptoms can fluctuate dramatically\(^5\)
7. 10-15\% of patients experience symptoms of withdrawal months to years after completion of their taper\(^6\)

I have read the Benzodiazepine Withdrawal Manual by Prof. C. Heather Ashton, who worked both as a General Practitioner and pharmacologist within the British NHS, and operated her own benzodiazepine withdrawal clinic for a number of years. I found it highly informative.

I seek your help with:

1. Planning a withdrawal plan which acknowledges that a patient-led withdrawal is usually more successful
2. An initial slow taper rate so that we can better determine what is a manageable taper plan for me
3. A plan which is flexible, so that we can decide together when I am ready to make a new reduction to my dose
4. Continued support in providing prescriptions so that I might complete my taper in a safe and manageable manner

Thank you for your patience and help

References

2 de las Cuevas C. Benzodiazepines: more “behavioural” addiction than dependence. Psychopharmacology (Berl). 2003 May Abstract
5 Ashton H. “Benzodiazepines: How They Work and How to Withdraw”. 2002

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For further details and references, please scan this with your smartphone, or go to benzoreform.org/pamphlet-details-and-references/

Disclaimer: This pamphlet does not provide patient medical advice. It is provided for informational purposes only. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

I Need Your Help

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