

Study examines potential misuse of anti-anxiety medication

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There is concern about the misuse of the sedative anti-anxiety medication alprazolam (Xanax) because of the "high" it can create. A new *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* study found that non-medical use of alprazolam in the United Kingdom is a significant issue, and it appears to be more prevalent in younger adults.

The study examined results from a survey that included 10,019 adults in the United Kingdom. The estimated national prevalence of lifetime non-medical use of alprazolam was 0.32%, and 1.30% for diazepam (valium), another anti-anxiety medication. The prevalence of non-medical use in the last 90 days was significantly different when split by age category for alprazolam, but not for diazepam, with alprazolam non-medical use being more common among [younger adults](#).

The authors noted that most individuals taking alprazolam for non-medical reasons are doing so without a prescription and therefore are unlikely to obtain [medical advice](#) before use.

"Further research is urgently needed to further explore the motivations for and appeal of alprazolam for non-medical use among young adults," they wrote. "This will enable appropriate public health interventions to prevent short-term toxicity and long-term dependence among young adults who are regularly using alprazolam."

More information: *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/bcp.13959](https://doi.org/10.1111/bcp.13959)

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