

Prescription of Benzodiazepines for Geriatric Patients in the Czech Republic



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SUMMARY: *The prescription and the resulting abuse of medicaments, specifically the prescription of sedatives, such as benzodiazepines, which have high potential in terms of psychological and physical dependence, pose a pressing problem at present. The abuse of and dependence on medicaments of this type is well known among adolescents and young adults. However, middle-aged and elderly people predominate among those affected by dependence on these substances. Major research studies have shown that treatment with benzodiazepine-based psychopharmacological agents is a frequent “blunder” as regards the medication of the depressive syndrome, especially in elderly patients. This article refers to the effects of such benzodiazepine-based psychopharmacological preparations on the psychological and somatic conditions of patients, particularly elderly clients whose therapy for their depressive syndrome is often based on this type of medication. The article also points out the possibility of iatrogenic dependence, i.e. dependence in which the physician plays an important role. The line between therapeutically suitable pharmacotherapy and an inappropriately selected treatment strategy, which could cause serious health problems to some patients, is also considered.*

KEY WORDS: BENZODIAZEPINES – DEPENDENCE – GERIATRICS – IATROGENIC IMPAIRMENT

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