



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## What are Depressants?

**Depressants**, sometimes referred to as **central nervous system (CNS) depressants** or **tranquilizers**, slow down (or “depress”) the normal activity that goes on in the brain and spinal cord. Doctors often prescribe them for people who are **anxious** or **can’t sleep**.

When prescription depressants are taken as prescribed by a doctor, they can be relatively safe and helpful. However, it is considered **misuse** when they are taken not as prescribed, to get “high,” or when you take pills prescribed for someone else. Misuse can lead to **dependence** and **addiction**.

Depressants can be divided into three primary groups: **barbiturates**, **benzodiazepines** and **sleep medications**. Common street names include: A-minus, Barbs, Candy, Downers, Phennies, Red Birds, Reds, Sleeping Pills, Tooies, Tranks, Yellows, Yellow Jackets, and Zombie Pills.

Type	Used to Treat	Effects
<b>Barbiturates</b> mephobarbital (Mebaral <sup>®</sup> ) phenobarbital (Luminal <sup>®</sup> ) sodium pentobarbital (Nembutal <sup>®</sup> )	Seizure disorders Anxiety and tension	<b>Short-term Effects</b> include: drowsiness, slurred speech, poor concentration, confusion, dizziness, problems with movement and memory, lowered blood pressure, slowed breathing.  <b>Long-term effects</b> are not known and need further study.



## PREVIEW

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## How Prescription Depressants are Misused

People misuse depressants by taking them in a way that is **not intended**, such as:

- *Taking someone else’s prescription depressant medication, even if it is for a medical reason like sleep problems.*
- *Taking a depressant medication in a way other than prescribed—for instance, taking more than the prescribed dose or taking it more often, or crushing pills into powder or opening capsules to snort or inject the drug.*
- *Taking a depressant to get “high.”*
- *Taking a depressant with other drugs or to counteract the effects of other drugs, such as stimulants.*
- *Mixing them with other substances, like alcohol or prescription opioids.*





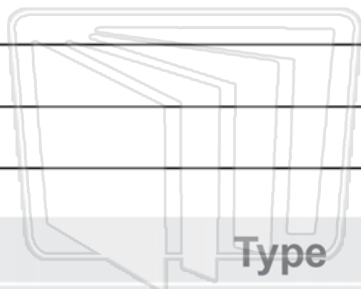
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Type

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Barbiturates

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## How are Prescription Depressants misused?

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