What is Diazepam?

- Diazepam is a medicine approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat all types of seizures, including absence, myoclonic, atonic (drop attacks), partial seizures and seizures associated with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.
- It is most often used together with another antiepileptic drug. It is also used in emergency situations involving seizures. It may also be used for other conditions as well as seizures, such as anxiety.
- The drug is quickly absorbed after taking it by mouth and it reaches its highest amount in the body in 1-2 hours. A rectal form of the medicine called diastat is also available.

Important questions to ask your doctor:

- Why am I being given this medicine? _____________________________
- What amount should I be taking? ________________________________

What does this drug look like and how should I take it?

There are several brands and generic forms of the medicine. The brand name Valium is shown below at the 0.5 mg pill, the 1 mg pill and the 2 mg pill and the generic form lorazepam at 1 mg pill is also shown.
Frequently Asked Questions:

**How do I take Diazepam?** To use the tablet form: chew tablets and swallow or swallow the tablet whole. This can be taken with or without food. Drink a small glass of water or liquid to wash down any leftover medicine. It’s important that this medicine is taken regularly or it won’t work right. Don’t skip doses even if you feel that you don’t need the drug.

Sometimes when a person takes this medicine long-term or in large amounts, their body may get used to this drug making the drug less effective or helpful. In most patients, lorazepam is usually prescribed for a period of 4-6 months, though at times your doctor may decide to keep you on the medication for a longer period of time. You should never stop taking this medication without talking to your doctor. Stopping the drug suddenly can worsen your condition and cause withdrawal symptoms including irritability, sleeplessness, nervousness, and seizures. Your doctor will need to decrease your dose gradually.

**What should I do if I miss a dose?** Take the missed dose as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take an extra dose unless prescribed by your doctor.

**How can I remember to take my medication?**
- Take the medicine at the same time each day.
- Take it at the same time as some other routine such as brushing your teeth, after meals or at bedtime.
- Use a pillbox so you can check it if you have taken a dose.
- Use an alarm to remind you of times to take a dose.
- Keep a written schedule or chart of when to take the medicine.
- Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider about problems remembering the medicine.

**What are the side-effects of this medication?** Common side-effects include poor coordination, behavior changes, unsteadiness, sleepiness, fatigue, drowsiness, blurred or double-vision, and dizziness.

**What if I experience side-effects?** Various side-effects may occur in taking this medication. Most side-effects are not serious and may disappear naturally. Call your doctor if you have any questions concerning your possible side effects. However, do not stop taking your medication without advice from your doctor. Contact your physician immediate if you experience any of the following side-effects:
- Allergic reactions (rashes, hives, difficulty breathing, swallowing)
- Aggressive behavior
- Suicidal thoughts
- Chest congestion
- Hallucinations
- Memory loss
- Shortness of breath
- Tremors

**How do I store this medication?** Keep this medicine in its original container tightly closed and out of reach of children. Store your prescription at room temperature, away from excess heat and moisture (i.e. not the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed.

**Just for Women:**

Women who are taking this medication who wish to become pregnant should discuss treatment options with their physician before becoming pregnant. Diazepam passes into breast milk and it is not known whether the medication will affect the nursing infant. Do not take Diazepam without first talking to your doctor if you are breast feeding a baby.

**Does this medication affect birth control pills?** This medication is not known to have any drug interactions with birth control pills.
**Will this medicine affect my menstrual cycle?** This medicine should not affect the menstrual cycle. If your cycle becomes irregular, call your doctor.

**More Questions?**

For more detailed information about Diazepam and seizures, please visit [www.epilepsy.com](http://www.epilepsy.com) and click on Treatment >> Seizure Medicines ([www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy/seizure_medicines.html](http://www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy/seizure_medicines.html))