



# BENZO ADDICTION TREATMENT PROGRAM

Call Santé Center for Healing today to get started on your recovery!

**(866) 717-0445**





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## What is Addiction?

The [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) defines addiction as a “chronic, relapsing disorder characterized by compulsive drug seeking, continued use despite harmful consequences, and long-lasting changes in the brain. It is considered both a complex brain disorder and a mental illness. Addiction is the most severe form of a full spectrum of substance use disorders, and is a medical illness caused by repeated misuse of a substance or substances.”

## What Does An Addiction To Benzodiazepines Look Like?

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), “benzodiazepines (also known as “benzos” and “downers”) are sedatives commonly used to treat insomnia, anxiety, and other conditions.” They slow the central nervous system. You may know benzos by their prescription names - Valium, Xanax, and Klonopin. While many benzodiazepines are prescribed, they are also distributed illegally, without a prescription and can be abused.



## The [CDC](#) notes the effects of benzos include:

- Slowed reaction times
- Loss of motor control
- Slurred speech
- Dizziness
- Drowsiness
- Constipation
- Memory problems
- Restlessness
- Delirium
- Aggression
- Depression
- Hallucinations
- Paranoia

Xanax and Klonopin are two of the most commonly abused benzodiazepines. Both Xanax and Klonopin can be taken orally, crushed to snort or smoke, or dissolved into a solution for IV drug use. In addition to overdose and death, abusing benzos presents additional risk factors, including escalation to injection drug use which increases the risk for contracting HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C.



Research by the [CDC](#) focused on illicit benzodiazepine overdose between 2019 and 2020 found the following -

- ER visits for overdoses involving benzodiazepines increased 24% from 2019-2020
- Over 90% of all prescription and illicit benzodiazepine-involved overdose deaths also involved either prescription or illicitly manufactured opioids, highlighting the dangers of co-using opioids and benzodiazepines
- Benzodiazepines were involved in nearly 7,000 overdose deaths in 23 states from January 2019 - June 2020, accounting for 17% of all drug overdose deaths
- Illicit benzodiazepine deaths increased 520% (from 51 to 317) from 2019 to 2020

You may be contemplating whether you have a problem with benzos, whether Valium, Xanax, or Klonopin. Your family, friends, work colleagues, therapist, or medical provider may be expressing concern about your use.

Sedative use disorder exists on a spectrum, from mild, to moderate, to severe. Early treatment could prevent the escalation to more serious problems, including relationship crisis, financial upheaval, employment dilemmas, legal issues, medical distress, and death.



## How Prevalent is Benzodiazepine Addiction?

The [American Academy of Family Physicians \(AAFP\)](#) states that benzodiazepines are “rarely the preferred or sole drug of abuse. An estimated 80% of benzodiazepine abuse is part of polydrug abuse, most commonly with opioids...Benzodiazepines have multiple uses for polydrug addicts: they are used to enhance the euphoriant effects of opioids (such as to “boost” methadone doses), to alleviate withdrawal or abstinence syndromes (such as between heroin “fixes”), to temper cocaine highs, to augment alcohol synergistically and to modulate withdrawal states.”

### Additionally the [AAFP](#) reports -

- 15% of heroin users also used benzos daily for more than one year and 73% used benzos more often than weekly
- Studies indicate that from 5% to 90% of methadone users are also regular users of benzos.
- Studies also show that 3% to 41% of alcoholic persons report that they abused benzos at some time, oftentimes to regulate intoxication or withdrawal effects.
- Medical prescriptions constitute the primary source of supply for people who abuse benzos.

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As Director of Clinical Services at nationally renowned Santé Center for Healing, Adam Karazuba, MSN, LMSW shares from his professional experience with benzos:

*"As the national focus has largely shifted to the "Opioid Epidemic", the increase in Benzodiazepine abuse remains problematic. We have consistently seen an increase in the number of cases where Benzodiazepine abuse is paired with Alcohol Abuse and / or Opioid Abuse, both of which lead to a significantly increased risk of overdose. The access and availability of commonly prescribed benzos, including Xanax and Klonopin, is a persistent area of attention in providing care for patients we treat, on both in Residential and Outpatient basis."*



## What Does Treatment for Benzos Use Look Like at Santé Center for Healing?

Treatment of sedative use disorder is unique to each individual and based on a number of factors. An assessment by a treatment center like Santé Center for Healing is a great place to start. During an assessment you'll meet with clinical and medical staff to assess what level of care (Medical Detox, Residential, Intensive Outpatient, Transitional Living, etc.) will be most appropriate to meet your needs. Levels of care help determine what your treatment looks like, for example -

You may need more intensive treatment that includes around the clock residential care with initial services like medical detox or other medication management.

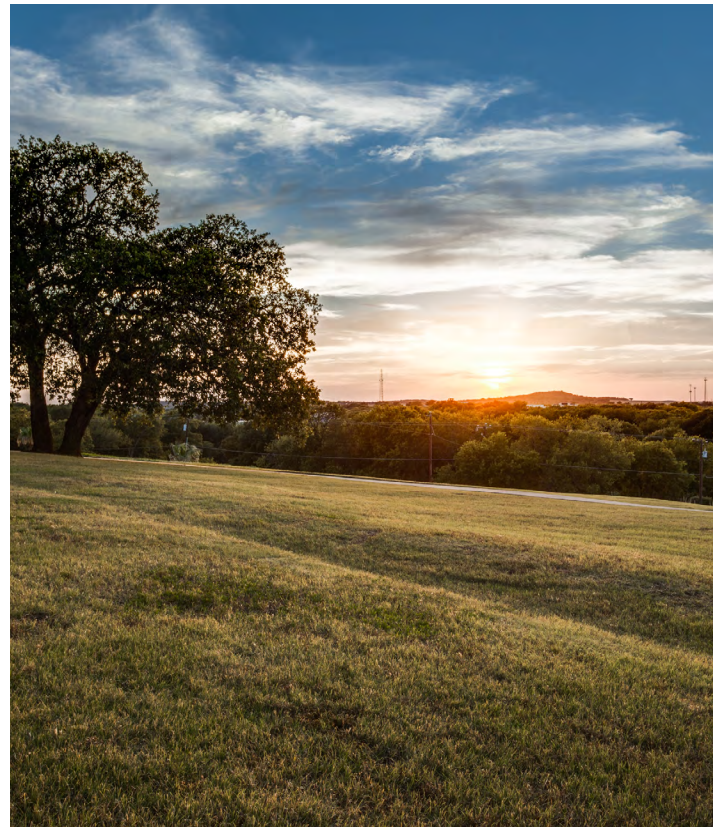
You may live at home while attending an intensive outpatient level of care during the day or at night.

You may need a structured transitional living to access peer support and accountability in a therapeutically supported environment.



While you may be seeking an assessment primarily for benzo use, we understand it's common to be using other substances (prescribed or not prescribed) in addition to benzos. It's important to be as transparent as possible about other substances you may also be taking. Shame and guilt are commonly felt during an assessment. We understand how vulnerable it can feel to share about your substance use and its effects on your life. This is not a moral failure. This is a medical condition, a disease. It's important that you try your best to be as transparent as possible with your usage, including frequency, amount, and any side effects you've experienced as a result.

You may have preconceived notions about what treatment looks like but at Santé, treatment includes a variety of clinical tools like individual therapy, group therapy, neurofeedback, experiential therapy, equine therapy (when appropriate), expressive arts, physical fitness, and more! At Santé we believe that long-term recovery is possible.



## Why Should I Seek Treatment?

Getting sober and staying sober can be challenging. Getting evidence-based, professional medical and clinical help increases the likelihood you receive the crucial tools necessary to achieve long-term recovery.

The [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) reports that "research has shown unequivocally that good outcomes are contingent on adequate treatment length. Generally for residential or outpatient treatment, participation for less than 90 days is of limited effectiveness, and treatment lasting significantly longer is recommended for maintaining positive outcomes." If 90 days feels overwhelming to think about, take things one step at a time. Can you commit to an assessment to start?



# What Does Long-Term Recovery Look Like?

At Santé, discharge planning begins as soon as you're admitted to any program or level of care. We want you to have a plan that's uniquely crafted to your needs after treatment. Addiction is a chronic disease that needs ongoing support. Recovery isn't achieved upon completion of residential or intensive outpatient treatment. Rather, it's a process of ongoing growth day by day.

To help you stay on track, upon discharge from Santé alumni are automatically enrolled in Santé's "Open Road" program where you'll have access to support, activities, and more, to help you along your path. The alumni program involves a variety of activities to learn how to do life sober with weekly support meetings, quarterly road trips, fun sports events, community service and sharing experience, strength and hope with those who need it.



## Wrap-up

If you want to discuss benzo use or abuse in your life or that of a loved one, we're here to support you 24/7. You can reach masters level Santé therapists anytime at (866) 717-0445 or by visiting our website at <https://www.santecenter.com>.

*"Thank you for doing more than giving me my life back. I actually have a life, friends and successful relationships now."*

*Santé alumni*

