

PE1651/HHHH

Anonymous submission of 20 January 2018

I was put on a benzodiazepine in 2008 after an accident. I always took it exactly as prescribed. I slowly started getting very sick. This was blamed on outside things that never fully led to any real diagnosis, instead of quickly identifying the actual culprit, the sole prescription I took. I found out in 2014 that the benzodiazepine was causing my illness. At that point I was bedridden and my quality of life was gone. I still am bedridden as of 2018 and nobody in medicine knows how to get me off these drugs safely. I have been forced to taper on my own over 4 years with the assistance of websites started by patients because medical providers do not have a clue about these drugs. The tapering process is torture. I consider suicide daily. Not because I'm depressed but because I wish to unzip my body and escape these symptoms. There isn't an aspect of my life that isn't harmed. I've lost everything in my life, family members, friends, employment, my health, my ability to drive, shop for food and take care of myself. I cannot get a haircut, go to the dentist, see a friend. I cannot read a book or watch a television show. This is all from taking a small dose of a benzodiazepine as prescribed. I cannot conceivably get the level of care I need in any capacity because of the drug damage is so misunderstood by medicine and government. The good news is the science says once I am safely off, in about 18 months I should start restoring functionality.

I was a healthy women in her mid 20's, I am now only barely 35, I've lost the most important financial years, and will be starting at zero whenever I get well. I estimate my cost to society in medical bills alone from misdiagnosis leading to unnecessary and ineffective treatment is over 2 million dollars. That's not including other things like disability and government assistance.

You have a role in taking action. I cannot believe this hasn't been addressed in society, considering there are so many people devastatingly sick from these drugs since the 1960s, with no recourse, help or medical treatment. I beg you to please do something about this, to take responsible, patient driven action today. Please be careful of which experts you accept. I've found physicians with adequate information about these drugs to be nearly none.