

# What Can Happen When You Mix Alcohol With Depressants?

While drinking alcohol is legal for individuals over 21 years of age and a commonly accepted social habit in our culture, there are certain times when it could be dangerous, and even life-threatening, to consume alcohol.

Mixing alcohol with other drugs, especially depressants, is one of those times alcohol consumption could become dangerous. If you are taking depressants, prescribed or otherwise, it is certainly prudent to avoid alcohol at all costs. On its own, alcohol can be a dangerous substance if abused, but even more hazardous for those struggling with substance abuse and addiction.

It is important to know the harmful effects of mixing depressant drugs with alcohol to prevent possible life-threatening or life-altering reactions in your body. It is also important to know that if you or someone you know is struggling with substance abuse or alcohol addiction, there are options to get treatment.

## What Is A Depressant?

When prescribed by your physician and responsibly taken as directed, depressants are a class of drugs made to chemically increase your body's relaxation responses, decrease anxiety, help induce sleep, and even reduce seizures.

Depressant drugs work by slowing, or depressing, the body's central nervous system (CNS). Ultimately, these drugs slow your brain's awareness and responses to reduce unwanted behaviors of over-activity in the brain.

Some of the most common depressant drugs include:

- Alcohol
- Xanax
- Valium
- Ativan
- Ambien
- Flexeril

While these are the most common depressant drugs, there are many more drugs on the market that work to chemically suppress your CNS and help alleviate difficult symptoms of various conditions or disorders.

## Mixing Alcohol With Depressants

Alcohol itself is a depressant. It affects the same part of the brain as other oral or injectable depressants. Therefore, the combination of alcohol and other depressant drugs is incredibly dangerous and could lead to poisoning or overdose.

Some physical side-effects of alcohol overindulgence may include:

- Risk of ulcers
- Increased risk of certain cancers
- Rapid heartbeat
- Liver damage
- Higher blood pressure
- Loss of consciousness/blackouts
- Memory loss

These are only some of the physical effects your body may see when abusing alcohol alone. If compounded with other depressant drugs, your body could face even more severe reactions and shut down completely, leading to organ failures, coma, or even death.

## Substance Abuse And Dependency

Again, when prescribed by your physician and taken responsibly, depressants can help improve quality of life for those with conditions requiring depressant medication. The problem arises when a drug dependency is formed and/or substance abuse takes place.

The effects of alcohol are similar to those of prescribed depressants, so many individuals may “self-medicate” to feel better in the short term. Since alcohol is not a prescribed or controlled substance, it is easy for individuals to acquire it and consume it to excess or mix with their prescribed depressant drugs.

As dependencies and addictions develop, it becomes increasingly more difficult for the individual to stop abusing their drug(s) of choice. Often, interventions are required to help the drug abuser or addict accept an addiction treatment option that will work for them.

## Treatment For Substance Abuse And Addictions

Physical side-effects are not the only indication of substance abuse or addiction. For example, those with dependencies on drugs or alcohol may find themselves withdrawn from their friends or family, disinterested in work or hobbies that once brought joy, financial struggles, and many other social or emotional drawbacks.

It is important to identify a drug or alcohol addiction so you can help get your friend or loved one the treatment they need to get better. Intervening in an ongoing addiction or dependency can be difficult and should be handled carefully. However, when done correctly, you can achieve sobriety for your loved one and help them proceed to a healthy and productive life.

“Ohio Center for Addiction and Recovery” can help your loved one find and sustain sobriety with outpatient treatment, alcohol addiction treatment, and substance abuse treatment options carefully tailored catered to meet their needs.

There is help for alcohol addiction and substance abuse, and the first step is understanding your options. Call “Ohio Center for Addiction and Recovery” today to take back control from drugs or alcohol.