

[IMAGE]

## Sleeping Pills Can Kill You

By Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h)

The statistics are staggering when it comes to sleeping pills. Between 6% and 10% of U.S. adults take "hypnotic" drugs (prescription sleeping pills) in a given year. These include benzodiazepines, nonbenzodiazepines, zaleplon, barbiturates, and sedative antihistamines.

What most people don't know is that the risk of death greatly increases relative to the number of times people take sleeping drugs. Those who take hypnotics once or twice a month are over 3 ½ times likely to die than those who don't. Those who take hypnotics more often are over 5 times as likely to die. As if this is not enough, those who are taking hypnotics heavily are also at a higher risk of developing cancer, according to the latest research on sleeping pills.

Given that there are an additional 24 previous reports with similar findings, the researchers question if the "meagre benefits of hypnotics" could justify the "substantial risks." Their data suggests that "in 2010, hypnotics may have been associated with 320,000 to 507,000 excess deaths in the USA alone."

When the research community agrees over and over again that a class of drugs is too dangerous, it's time to pay attention. It could be 10 years or more before a government agency finally wakes up and recognizes this issue. In the meantime, the best advice is to stay away from hypnotics.

Talk to your chiropractor about how to get the best sleep if you are having a hard time staying asleep at night.

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**Donald Petersen Jr.** is the president and publisher of MPA Media, which produces To Your Health and a variety of other media resources on natural health and wellness, including trade publications for the chiropractic and acupuncture professions.

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