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# Medication Policy

*Being prescribed medications from an outside physician, that are against our in-house policy, does not preclude you from being a member. Nonetheless, we will not be responsible for starting, restarting, or filling these medications for any period of time.*

*If you feel you need these medications, we will refer you to an appropriate specialist who can prescribe a safe dosage.*

*Long term or frequent use of these medications are risky and have dangerous side effects including addiction, need for escalating dosing, dependance, withdrawal, and cognitive decline. It is for this reason we have chosen not to include them in our list of options for prescriptions.*

## ADD/ADHA: Amphetamines (Ritalin, Adderall, Etc.)

We do NOT prescribe or manage the use of amphetamine (or Amphetamine type) medications.

## Narcotics/Opioids (Lortab, Oxycodone, Tramadol, etc.)

Opioids, (Morphine and its relatives,) are a last resort for ongoing pain. Addressing underlying health issues by using non-opiate medications (creams, short term steroids, muscle relaxants, supplements), manual medicine techniques (horizontal therapy, rehabilitation, massage, acupuncture) and lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, hormone balancing, sleep) can significantly reduce and adequately manage chronic pain. Short term (3-7 days) may be needed for certain severe conditions. In these cases, we may give this as an option along with other non-narcotic options and allow the patient to choose what is best for them. We will never prescribe this class of medication as a long-term solution.

## Anxiety, panic attacks: Benzodiazepines (Xanax, Valium, Ativan, etc.)

Benzodiazepines (also known as “Benzos”) are a class of medication used for a variety of purposes – including anxiety and “panic attacks.” Long-term or frequent use of benzos comes with significant risk of dependance, increasing tolerance, abuse, mental function and adverse effects on physical/mental health. These issues are particularly profound with shorter-acting agents such as alprazolam (Xanax and Ativan)

We use non-addictive therapies/medicines for long term control of anxiety disorders, several classes of non-benzos medications, therapies and psychology techniques have proven to be effective and safer than benzodiazepines. We do NOT prescribe the deadly duo of narcotics and benzos. Please do not ask or expect us to do so.

## Insomnia: Sleep Medication (Ambien, Lunesta, etc)

We encourage patients with insomnia issues to improve sleep through a variety of lifestyle changes and therapies, melatonin and hormone balancing. Many commonly used sleep meds do not actually promote healthy, restorative sleep. Rather they tend to sedate you. This causes a person to not awaken easily. Short term use of sleeping medication can be an effective and safe way to deal with insomnia. Some sleep meds such as Ambien (zolpidem) can be dangerous to use on a regular basis and should only be used with caution.

**MEMBERS: As always, your provider is just a phone call or text message away. It's better to be safe than sorry. Reach out if you are worried or if a protocol isn't helping.**