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COMBINING BENZODIAZEPINES WITH OPIATES

I want all my patients to know that combining benzodiazepines like Xanax, Ativan, Valium, Klonopin, clonazepam, alprazolam, lorazepam, etc. with opiates can decrease your respiratory drive and you can stop breathing. Furthermore, combining these drugs with alcohol can increase the likelihood of depressing your respiratory drive. If you have underlying sleep apnea it will be necessary to get a sleep study to evaluate your respirations while you are sleeping to see if you do have worsening of your apnea when you are on a benzodiazepine with buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex, Zubzolv) which is a long acting opiate. Buprenorphine does not cause respiratory depression but in combination with a benzodiazepine you can have decrease breathing. A lot of over doses occur by combining benzodiazepines with opiates.

Have you been diagnosed with sleep apnea: _____ yes _____ no

Name

Signature

____/____/____
Date