**Ambien: Benefits worth the Risk?**

Some studies show that the sedative known as Ambien (zolpidem) may have risks that are more severe than the depression or insomnia that the drug is commonly prescribed for. The sedative or also known as a hypnotic affects chemicals in your brain that cause sleeping problems. In this article, I’m going to go over each individual side effect and compare the pros and cons. I’ll let you decide after reading this if you think taking this medication is worth the risk.

There are two types of Ambien. The first is immediate -release form which is used in assisting sleep. The second, extended- release like Ambien CR, is actually two separate layers. The outside layer dissolves quicker helping you fall asleep while the inner layer dissolves slower to help you stay asleep.

Every drug on the market today has side effects. Most are relatively minor that does not require medical attention (e.g. headache, itchy dry eyes, etc.). From recent research we have found that almost all of Ambien’s side effects are on the severe side. Ambien side effects include amnesia, damaged sleep staging and addiction (if taken longer than 7-14 days), activity in the brain can race and cause seizers after stopping Ambien, along with less severe symptoms like impair your thinking and your reaction time, still feeling sleepy after a full nights rest, may be habit forming and unpleasant withdraw symptoms.

To add to those unpleasant symptoms, through research I have found some first-hand accounts of other horrific side effects. You should wait at least four hours before doing anything that requires alertness. Amnesia (forgetfulness) can occur if a full eight hours sleep is not accomplished. If you consume even one alcoholic drink at any time throughout the day, Ambien can interact with it and cause overdose symptoms such as sleepiness, confusion, fainting, dizziness, shallow breathing and in worst cases, coma or even death.

It has been recorded that the first few days of taking Ambien, you will usually feel uncoordinated and tired. As your tolerance builds up, this starts to go away. The negative side to that is that’s a sign that your body has become dependent on the medication and severe withdraw symptoms can occur.

After a few hours of researching forums and blog post, I found a disturbing post where an individual has been on Ambien for over a year. Over time, this led to sleepwalking. This individual left their home in bare feet and ended up by a river. The Sheriff found this person and stated that she was unresponsive. In the end, this woman ended up in the psych ER and petitioned to a mental institution for four days until everything was sorted out. If you ask my opinion it’s not worth the few extra hours of sleep a night. There has to be a better way.

So as we wrap this up, ultimately the decision is yours. Not everyone is affected by the drug in the same way and everyone is different. Now that you know the truth and the real side effects of Ambien, ask yourself, is the benefits worth the risk?