

Medication: Diazepam	PDN: 6918.05	Last Updated: August 21 2025	PMD: Andrew Travers*	PDC: Tanya Fraser*	Page 1 of 2
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DIAZEPAM (Valium)

1.0 Classification

- Benzodiazepine

2.0 Mechanism of Action

- Sedative-hypnotic agent that causes central nervous system (CNS) depression and relaxation of skeletal muscle.

3.0 Indications

- Actively seizing patient
- For sedation after ETI
- Acute alcohol withdrawal (moderate to severe): patient exhibiting intention tremors, tachycardia, diaphoresis, memory problems, disorientation, trouble sleeping, high fever, hypertension, hallucinations, seizures and/or delirium tremens.

4.0 Contraindications

- Known hypersensitivity to benzodiazepines.
- Hypotension (BP less than 100)
- Acute narrow (closed) angle glaucoma.

5.0 Precautions

- Diazepam is incompatible with many medications.
- Use the minimal dose possible for patients with heart failure/pulmonary edema or head injured patients who have normal or low BP.
- Consider other differential diagnoses, such as sepsis or alcoholic ketoacidosis or upper GI bleeding, when alcohol withdrawal is suspected.

6.0 Route

- May be given IV/IO or PR

7.0 Dosage

Adult

- Actively seizing: 5 mg IV/IO slow push; repeat immediately x 1 if required (maximum total dose of 10 mg).
- Post ETI sedation: 2.5-5.0 mg IV/IO push as required (maximum total dose of 10 mg).
- Acute alcohol withdrawal (moderate/severe): 10 mg IV/IO slow push; repeat q 10 minutes if symptoms are still present [MCCP consultation required after 2 doses (20 mg) for discussion regarding further dosing to achieve a goal of the patient resting comfortably but rousable to voice].

Pediatric

Midazolam is the benzodiazepine of choice in the pediatric population.

- If diazepam is required: 0.2 mg/kg IV/IO over 1 minute or 0.5 mg/kg PR to a maximum of 5 mg; both can be repeated immediately as needed (maximum total dose of 10 mg)

8.0 Supplied

- 10 mg in a 2 mL ampule

9.0 May Be Given By

- For seizures: PCP with additional approved activities/ACP/CCP
- For sedation post ETI: PCP with additional approved activities/ACP/CCP
- For acute alcohol withdrawal: ACP/CCP

10.0 Adverse Effects

- Respiratory depression
- Loss of airway protective reflexes

11.0 Special Notes

- The effects of diazepam can be accentuated by CNS depressants such as opioids and alcohol.
- The Clinical Support Paramedic must be contacted prior to giving benzodiazepines in conjunction with opioids to the same patient.
- Pregnancy category D [potential benefits may warrant use of the drug in pregnant women despite potential risks (e.g., if it is required in a life-threatening situation)].

12.0 References

- Adult Airway Management Clinical Practice Guideline
- Adult Cardiac Arrhythmia Clinical Practice Guideline
- Altered Level of Consciousness Clinical Practice Guideline
- Behavioural Emergencies Clinical Practice Guideline
- Pain Management Clinical Practice Guideline
- Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS)

*Electronically Signed

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