

Gabapentin and Pregabalin

AKA: Pregabs, Gaba-p, Lyrica

Popularity not monitored by CSEW; 400% increase in prescriptions 2006-2016

Method of Use: swallowed
Gabapentin: 0.9-3.6 (up to 4.8g/day)
Pregabalin: up to 300mg daily

Mechanism: interacts with GABA system reducing electrical signals in brain

Duration: 6 hrs+

Effects: +ve: reduction in neural pain; relaxed muscles, drowsiness, reduction in anxiety, sense of calm, wellbeing

About: used for anxiety, neuropathic pain, and anticonvulsant. Pregabalin is a more potent successor to gabapentin

Law: Class C; sch 3

Cost: 50p-£1 for 1-2 pills on street

Profile: Depressants; hypnotics, anxiolytics

Source: prescribed, internet, street

Indicators: drowsy, slow reactions, calm

Risks: dependency, overdose (espec. if mixed with alcohol, opiates); Acute withdrawal



As benzos and other drugs have become more closely regulated, the prescription substance of choice for those seeking mental cushioning with pain relief is gabapentin or pregabalin. They have become one of the sought-after drugs in prison and other settings.

On its own a relatively safe drug with a low OD risk. When combined with alcohol or opiates, the risk of OD increases. Tolerance and dependency can develop.