

## **PRESCRIBER CHECKLIST...**

### **10 STEPS OF BZD DISCONTINUATION**

- INFORM patient (by letter or face-to-face)
- Pick a QUIT DATE together (involve family member)
- ENCOURAGE: "Patients typically experience more energy, clearer thinking, less anxiety and depression, better memory once the taper is over."
- On paper, convert BZD's and/or Z drugs to Valium and give them the estimated VALIUM TAPER SCHEDULE in writing (6 months minimum...typically 1 year or longer) and tell them they're in charge of the rate of the taper
- Give them the MEETING SCHEDULE for return visits (weekly x 2 weeks, then Q2 weeks x1-2 months, then once a month)
- COMFORT: "There are adjunctive medications to help with breakthrough anxiety and sleep if needed."
- HANDOUTS on Insomnia and Anxiety Management
- "Possible withdrawal symptoms to ANTICIPATE are insomnia, anxiety, mental clouding... this is normal and will pass over time."
- "Because of the danger of switching one substance for another, I'd like you to AGREE NOT TO DRINK, use recreational drugs, or medical marijuana during the taper."
- "You can do this...I'll walk with you every step of the way."