

XANAX

Please see below advice from Dave Parvin of Drug Sense UK regarding the increase in use of a prescription drug called XANAX (also known as Alprazolam):

This sits in the group of drugs known as 'benzodiazepines (benzos). A powerful drug that effects the brain and central nervous system to produce a 'calming effect'.

Generally prescribed to treat patients suffering from 'depression and anxiety'. Xanax is a Class C Prescription Drug, and as such is illegal to possess if you haven't got a prescription authorising you to do so.

I have had several emails over the last month or so regarding students using this particular substance. Make no mistake this is a 'serious' drug to play around with and does have strong addictive properties over long term usage.



Signs & symptoms to keep an eye out for:

- Drowsiness.
- Impaired coordination.
- Slurred speech.
- Requiring more of the drug to feel its effects.
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms.
- Manic type moods.
- Memory problems.
- Concentration problems

*Note XANAX is a powerful 'sedative' so drowsiness is a one of the more common features of its use.

Q. How are students illegally getting hold of XANAX..?

A. Two main markets are the US and China. Both offer XANAX on numerous websites with simple credit card payments. There have been some serious concerns from the XANAX coming in from China in particular to the substandard pills that are being produced. Street dealers will also push these if they know there is a market for them.



Q. Is there anything distinctive about the tablets that would identify them as XANAX...?

A. Yes – they will generally have the word 'XANAX' embossed on them and often with numbers showing the dosage amount (as pictured left).



As you can see from this particular picture (left) – this is a different shape but still has the word ‘XANAX’ on them. This particular version seems to be related to the XANAX that is coming in from America.

Q. Can we seize these from students if found on site...?

A. Yes you would have no problem at all doing that as they are a Class C drug and if an individual found with them cannot confirm with you they have a prescription for the drug – then technically they are breaking the law (possession of a Class C Drug as per the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971). You also have many other areas you can fall back on if in doubt, such as safeguarding issues, possessing a substance that may cause an individual or others harm...etc..

I know in particular with some of the Boarding Schools that have international students (particular from china) that prescription that aren’t in English can cause a major headache for you. **Golden Rule** if in doubt seize them until you can verify exactly what they are.

If these particular drugs are circulating in your area please do raise the awareness of the students to the potential risks associated with the use of them and the fact that they are illegal to have in their possession if not authorised (through prescription from doctor) to have them.

BSA is very grateful to Dave for this advice, and to Nurse Adviser Jill Hill for arranging this. The drug featured on the “Victoria Derbyshire” show on the BBC because of the level of concerns. Members of staff concerned about the screening and searching procedure are referred to the UK Government guidance, [Searching, Screening and Confiscation](#).

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