

Southern Illinois Regional EMS System

JJ-8 DIAZEPAM (VALIUM)

1. Class:
 - 1.1. Benzodiazepine.
2. Description:
 - 2.1. Diazepam is a frequently prescribed medication to treat anxiety and stress. In emergency care, diazepam is used to treat alcohol withdrawal and grand mal seizure activity. Diazepam acts on the limbic, thalamic, and hypothalamic regions of the central nervous system to potentiate the effects of inhibitory neurotransmitters, raising the seizure threshold in the motor cortex. It also may be used in conscious patients during cardioversion and transcutaneous pacing to induce amnesia and sedation. Its use as an anticonvulsant may be short-lived because of rapid redistribution from the central nervous system. Rapid IV administration may be followed by respiratory depression and excessive sedation, particularly in elderly patients.
3. Onset and Duration:
 - 3.1. Onset: (IV) 1 – 5 minutes (IM) 15 – 30 minutes.
 - 3.2. Duration: (IV) 15 minutes – 1 hour (IM) 15 minutes – 1 hour.
4. Indications:
 - 4.1. Acute anxiety states.
 - 4.2. Acute alcohol withdrawal.
 - 4.3. Skeletal muscle relaxation.
 - 4.4. Seizure activity.
 - 4.5. Premedication before countershock or transcutaneous pacing.
5. Contraindications:
 - 5.1. Hypersensitivity to the drug.
 - 5.2. Substance abuse (use with caution).
 - 5.3. Coma, unless the patient has:
 - 5.3.1. Seizures.
 - 5.3.2. Severe muscle rigidity.
 - 5.3.3. Myoclonus.
 - 5.4. Shock.
 - 5.5. Central nervous system depression as a result of head injury.
 - 5.6. Respiratory Depression.
6. Adverse Reactions:
 - 6.1. Hypotension.
 - 6.2. Reflex tachycardia (rare).
 - 6.3. Respiratory depression.
 - 6.4. Ataxia.
 - 6.5. Psychomotor impairment.
 - 6.6. Confusion.
 - 6.7. Nausea.

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(continued)

7. Drug Interactions:
 - 7.1. Diazepam may precipitate central nervous system depression and psychomotor impairment when the patient is taking other central nervous system depressant medications.
 - 7.2. Diazepam should not be administered with other medications because of possible precipitation:
 - 7.2.1. Incompatible with most fluids.
 - 7.2.2. Should be administered into an IV of NS solution.
8. How Supplied:
 - 8.1. Parenteral: 5mg/ml vials, ampules, Tubex.
9. Dosage and Administration:
 - 9.1. Seizure Activity:
 - 9.1.1. Adult:
 - 9.1.1.1. 5mg over 2 minutes IV q 10 – 15 minutes prn:
 - 9.1.1.1.1. Up to 10mg for most adults.
 - 9.1.1.1.2. Maximum dose 30mg.
 - 9.1.2. Pediatric:
 - 9.1.2.1. Dose for infants 30 days to 5 years:
 - 9.1.2.1.1. 0.2mg to 0.5mg IV every 2 – 5 minutes.
 - 9.1.2.1.2. Maximum dose 5mg.
 - 9.1.2.2. Dose for children 5 years or older:
 - 9.1.2.2.1. 1mg IV every 2 – 5 minutes.
 - 9.1.2.2.2. Maximum dose 10mg.
 - 9.2. Premedication for Cardioversion or Transcutaneous Pacing:
 - 9.2.1. Adult:
 - 9.2.1.1. 5 – 15mg IV 5 – 10 minutes before procedure.
10. Special Considerations:
 - 10.1. Pregnancy Category D.
 - 10.2. Diazepam may cause local venous irritation.
 - 10.3. Diazepam has short duration of anticonvulsant effect.
 - 10.4. Reduce dose by 50% in elderly patients.
 - 10.5. Resuscitation equipment should be readily available.