

"Gas Station" Heroin



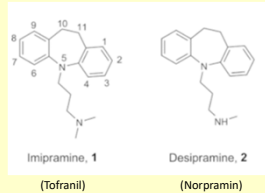
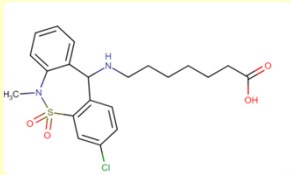
- Marketed as a dietary supplement – not approved by FDA
- Available on internet as well as gas stations, convenience stores
- Drug is tianeptine – an antidepressant at therapeutic doses
 - Available in Europe, Asia as Coaxil® and Stablon®
- High doses -> opiate or narcotic like effect
- Used to get high and/or to reduce withdrawal by people with opioid dependence

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Tianeptine - antidepressant



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Clinical (and not...) Use of Tianeptine

- Standard Dose– 25-50mg/day
 - Depression, anxiety and IBS symptoms
 - High risk for dependence and tolerance requiring increasing doses
 - Common side-effects reported headache, GI symptoms, dizziness, changes in dreaming
- High Dose- >100mg
 - Euphoria, psychosis, sedation, respiratory depression
 - Up to 5-10 g per day (average 1900 mg)
- Withdrawal
 - Agitation, delirium, nausea, vomiting, tachycardia, HTN, diarrhea, tremor, sweating

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Demographics	All (17)	Tianeptine alone (11)
Median age (range)	32 (20-69)	32 (27-55)
Male gender	8 (47%)	6 (55%)
Symptoms		
Hypertension	6 (35%)	4 (36%)
Tachycardia	5 (29%)	3 (27%)
Hypoxic	0	0
QRS prolongation	0	0
Lethargy	11 (65%)	7 (63%)
Agitated	5 (29%)	3 (27%)
Hallucinations	1 (6%)	1 (9%)
Myoclonic symptoms	2 (12%)	1 (9%)
GI distress	2 (12%)	2 (18%)
Treatment		
Benzodiazepines	5 (29%)	2 (18%)
Ketamine	1 (6%)	
Naloxone	4 (24%)	3 (27%)
Alpha-2 agonists	2 (12%)	
Antipsychotics	4 (24%)	2 (18%)
Antimuscarinics	2 (12%)	1 (9%)
Gabapentin	1 (6%)	
Disposition		
Admitted to ICU	11 (65%)	6 (55%)
Admitted to non-ICU	2 (12%)	2 (18%)
Discharged home	3 (18%)	2 (18%)
Unknown/refused referral	1 (6%)	1 (9%)

Rushton W et al. Clin Toxicol 2021.

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Packages found in 2 fatal cases



Bakota EL et al. J Anal Tox 2018

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Virginia Poison Center Tianeptine Cases

- 21 human exposure cases since 2014; 6 in 2024
- 70% as abuse or misuse; 3 using for withdrawal
- 18 taking by mouth; 3 by injection
- 20/21 were between 20 and 40 years old
- All 18 patients were treated in a hospital
 - 38% treated and released; 29% ICU
- Medical outcome – significant
 - 52% - moderate; 29% - major; 14% - minor

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Non-Medical Use of OTC or Unregulated Drugs

- Loperamide (Imodium)
 - Used to treat diarrhea
 - Opioid effects at VERY high doses
 - Can cause serious disturbances in heart rhythms
- Kratom
 - Plant based drug – stimulant at low doses and opioid-like at high doses
- Xylazine (Tranq)
 - Veterinary sedative; usually mixed with fentanyl
- Tianeptine

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