

Drug Interactions Quick Guide

A calm, quick reference for when you suspect mixing, or you want to be prepared.



Before you read anything else

Most serious harm does not come from one substance on its own. It comes from **mixing**.

Mixing makes effects harder to spot, harder to manage, and easier to misjudge. If something has been combined and you are unsure, **acting early is safer than waiting**.

Alcohol is one of the biggest risk multipliers. It turns manageable situations into emergencies.

Why mixing substances increases risk

When substances are combined, their effects can stack or clash.

- Sedatives slow breathing
- Stimulants strain the heart
- Some drugs mask the warning signs of others

High-risk combinations to know about

Alcohol + Benzodiazepines (diazepam, alprazolam, “street Valium”)

What happens Extreme drowsiness, memory loss, slowed breathing.

Why this is dangerous Both suppress breathing.

Watch for Slurred speech, very slow breathing, unresponsiveness.

Alcohol + Cocaine

What happens Increased strain on the heart. Feeling “less drunk” than they are.

Why this is dangerous A toxic substance forms in the body when these are combined.

Watch for Chest pain, overheating, collapse.

MDMA + SSRIs (antidepressants)

What happens MDMA feels weaker or does not work.

Why this is dangerous People may take more, increasing risk of overheating and serotonin-related complications.

Watch for Confusion, agitation, overheating.

Ketamine + Alcohol

What happens Loss of coordination, vomiting, slowed breathing.

Why this is dangerous High risk of choking and breathing suppression.

Watch for Shallow breathing, vomiting while drowsy, not waking properly.

Multiple depressants together (alcohol, benzos, opioids)

What happens Extreme sedation and breathing suppression.

Why this is dangerous One of the highest overdose-risk combinations.

Watch for Blue lips, very slow breathing, no response.

Nitazene note (relevant here)

Nitazenes are very strong synthetic opioids. They have appeared unexpectedly in some street pills and powders. Mixing them with alcohol or benzodiazepines greatly increases overdose risk, even at very small amounts.

What we see in real life

- People do not plan to mix. It happens over time.
- Alcohol is often the “extra” that tips things over.
- Friends assume someone is just asleep, not unwell.
- Delay is common because no one wants to overreact.

Most emergencies we hear about start with uncertainty, not recklessness.

What to do

- Do not leave them alone
- Place them in the recovery position if drowsy or vomiting
- Get medical help early
- If you can, tell medics what was taken or suspected

You will not get in trouble for asking for help.

When to call 999

Call 999 if someone is:

- Unconscious or not waking
- Not breathing properly
- Having a seizure
- In severe chest pain
- Overheating
- You suspect an overdose or unknown substance

Key message

If substances are mixed, risk goes up. **If you are unsure, act early.**