

# Questions and answers from FAAC

(Editors note: The following questions and answers are from the Farmington Area Advisory Council (FAAC). FAAC is the sponsoring Substance Abuse Prevention and Education Services. Questions are welcome and may be mailed to FAAC, 23450

Middle Belt, Farmington Hills, 48024, or call Rapline, 477-6800.)  
Q Are barbituates as addicting as heroin?  
A Barbituates, taken orally, are equally as addicting as heroin. The overdose rate is higher, a tolerance is

built up faster, and they are extremely toxic in large quantities.  
Q Why do people use barbituates?  
A Barbituates are man-made drugs which have a depressant action on the central nervous system. They are used for treatment of high blood pressure, epilepsy, insomnia, for a relaxant before and during surgery, or as a sedative for use in both mental and physical illness. As a medicine used under controlled supervision of a physician, barbituates have definite purpose and value.

To understand why people use and abuse barbituates for non-medical reasons, it is necessary to accept that some people think getting "stoned" on barbs is fun. It can be like a super-alcohol high, with the inconvenience of getting sick practically gone. It is viewed as an easy, temporary escape from everyday problems like school and work and other hassles. However, it is a temporary way out which the abuser pays back very shortly.

Most barbituate overdoses are non-intentional and happen not only to steady users but businessmen, housewives and others. A lot of these are due to alcohol being used in addition to the barbituate, in which case the two substances potentiate each other, creating an overdose.

Q Is it true that withdrawal from a barbituate addiction is dangerous?  
A Yes. Withdrawal from barbituates

is more dangerous than withdrawal from even the largest heroin habit. Fatal grand mal seizures can occur up to 14 days after withdrawal. Kicking cold without the supervision of a doctor, in a hospital or through a program, is like taking your life in your hands. And it takes only a few weeks of excessive use to start becoming really addicted.

Q How can I recognize a barbituate by brand name?  
A Names and types of barbituates usually end in "al." Some of these and their street slang include: pentobarbital (yellow jacket), secobarbital (red devil), phenobarbital (phenie) and amobarbital (blue heaven).

If you would like more information on barbituates, there are many good sources such as the American Pharmaceutical Association literature and the National Institute of Mental Health pamphlets.

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## Local man appointed

Brendan M. Kales, 31945 Kingswood Lane, Farmington Hills, was recently appointed to the board of directors of the Malpractice Insurance Fund. The appointment was made by Governor William G. Milliken.

Kales, general manager of the St. Paul Companies, will serve as a non-voting representative of an insurance company writing malpractice insurance in the state for a term expiring July 1, 1977.

Five appointments to the fund were announced in May of this year. These were: Dr. Brock E. Brush, Dearborn, chairman; Dr. H. Harvey Gass, Southfield; Ms. Odessa Komer, public member; State Treasurer Allison Green; and State Insurance Commissioner Thomas C. Jones who replaced former commissioner Daniel Demlow.

Since 1946, Kales, member of the board of directors of the Insurance Executives of Michigan, has been associated with the St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company. Senate confirmation is required for both appointments and reappointments.

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