

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4741

ANSWERED ON:23.04.2003

SIDE EFFECTS OF ALPRAX AND ALPRAZOLAM

M. JAGANNATH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware that Alprax and Alparazolam the two generic anti-anxiety medicines have become the drug-in-demand among urban people in the country as reported in the Times of India, dated February 9, 2003;
- (b) if so, the facts thereof alongwith the side-effects of these medicines on human body;
- (c) whether the Government propose to bring any legislation to ban their free sale; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) Alprazolam (Alprax is a brand name of Alprazolam) is a Benzodiazepine derivative and is popularly used as anxiolytic by medical community.

(b) Commonly reported side effects include, drowsiness, sedation, muscle weakness and loss of coordination. Abrupt withdrawal of Benzodiazepine may produce `Benzodiazepine withdrawal syndrome` which is characterized by confusion, toxic psychosis, convulsions or a condition resembling delirium tremens.

(c) & (d) Alprazolam falls under Schedule - H of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945 and sale of this drug is governed by Rule 97 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules. Rules 97 states that no Schedule -H drug is to be sold without the prescription of Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP) and the label of the drug should also carry the following warning:-

`Schedule - H drug : warning `to be sold on retail on the prescription of RMP.

In view of the above, and its medically accepted use, there is no proposal to ban the sale of this drug.