



Women abusing sleeping pills

Women Abusing Sleeping Pills

FOX News

"Initially they work extremely well and so you think you're safe," Alesandra Rain said. "Unfortunately they turn on you pretty rapidly." "That little innocent sleeping pill became something that was quite dangerous and nearly took my life."

Alesandra Rain started taking prescription sleeping pills after a bad car wreck and a wrecked marriage. Soon, she was hooked taking 60 Ambien and 240 other sleep meds every month, mixing them with hundreds more pills for pain and depression.

"And by the end I was on 1000 pills a month. If it can happen to someone like me it can happen to anybody," Alesandra said.

A study by the National Sleep Foundation found 30-percent of American women use some sort of sleep aid at least a few times a week. Other research shows 84-percent of new moms experience insomnia.

Sleep psychologist Dr. Kimberly Justice says just being a woman makes you more prone to sleep problems. From menstruation to pregnancy to menopause.

"All of those things can add to sleep disruption," Dr. Justice said.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends using hypnotics like Ambien, Lunesta or Sonata only once or twice a week, for a few weeks. Like cocaine and crystal meth you can build up a tolerance to sleep meds. And mixing the drugs with alcohol is dangerous, too.

"It could be deadly," Dr. Justice said.

You should also avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice while on sleep meds. The fruit can make the drugs absorb into your bloodstream faster and cause over sedation. For Alesandra, rehab was the answer to her sleeping pill problem.

"I wished I had been hooked on heroin. I would have been through it a lot quicker. What started as my biggest mistake in life, was heading down this path, has turned out to be this most enormous gift," Alesandra said.

She now runs her own non-profit, helping others from around the world overcome their prescription addictions.

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