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TO Deputy Director
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FROM MAJ O'Donnell
Dept of Beh. Bio.

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2. By: V.M. O'Donnell, T.J. Balkin, D.S. Friedman, G.H. Kamimori, R.K. Winegar, R.S. Duncan, D.P. Redmond and G.L. Belenky
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Director, WRAIR

ABNORMAL REACTIONS TO TRIAZOLAM IN HEALTHY MALE SUBJECTS

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ABSTRACT REPRODUCTION FORM

ABNORMAL REACTIONS TO TRIAZOLAM IN HEALTHY MALE SUBJECTS

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Triazolam is a benzodiazepine commonly prescribed for sleep induction. It has also been used by U.S. troops during deployment operations. Current literature is replete with studies suggesting that some benzodiazepines, including clobazam and nitrazepam, interact with personality to impair or enhance motor skills, cognitive ability, and memory. There are, however, no studies in the literature which examine whether or not triazolam interacts with personality to affect performance. In the current study, subjects were administered triazolam (.50mg) at 0830 hours. Immediately following the drug administration, subjects completed a test battery including the simple reaction time, choice reaction time, H-Search, and Symbol Digit Modalities tests. These tests were administered periodically throughout the day. Individual subject reaction times and scores were compared to group mean reaction times and scores for all test periods. Emerging from this analysis was an aberrant population of subjects with unusually slow reaction times and low scores in the initial post-drug testing period, followed by reaction times and scores approximating the group means in all successive testing periods. All subjects within this aberrant population had scores in the 83rd percentile or above on the E-Scale (extraversion) of the Eysenck Personality Inventory. This finding suggests a possible interaction between triazolam, personality, and performance. Such an interaction is important to consider in recommending the use of triazolam for military operations, and may be relevant to the occasional anecdotal reports of idiosyncratic long-lasting learning deficits associated with triazolam use.

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