

Carisoprodol — Effects on Human Performance and Behavior

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ABSTRACT: Carisoprodol, a commonly prescribed muscle relaxant, has adverse effects on human performance and is gaining recognition as a factor in driver impairment and accident causation. Carisoprodol is a centrally acting skeletal muscle relaxant indicated for the relief of musculoskeletal pain. Carisoprodol and its major metabolite meprobamate have central nervous system (CNS) sedating effects similar to benzodiazepines or alcohol. Following the ingestion of carisoprodol or meprobamate symptoms such as drowsiness, confusion, poor balance, and coordination are well documented in drivers, all of which are detrimental to human performance and driving ability. Although identified as a drug capable of producing decreased human performance, the full extent of carisoprodol and meprobamate's involvement in motor vehicle accidents and effect on driving skills may not be fully appreciated. This is due in part to the common co-administration of other CNS depressants, hypnotics, or narcotic drugs and the lack of routine testing for carisoprodol and meprobamate in the human performance toxicology laboratory.

KEY WORDS: Behavior, carisoprodol, driving, human performance, impairment, meprobamate.
