

## WITHDRAWAL FROM BENZODIAPEZINES IN SPA TREATMENT

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The recent results stemming from the STOP-TAG [Dubois O, et al.; *Balneotherapy versus paroxetine in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder*, *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* (fév 2010) 18, 1-7] study have shown the way to demonstrating the considerable efficacy of psychiatric spa therapy compared to a reference treatment (Paroxetine) in generalized anxiety disorders. The study carried out on 237 patients has clearly indicated the impact of balneotherapy in this indication with indisputable evidence.

The questionable problem of withdrawal from benzodiazepines is a well-known issue throughout European countries, particularly in France. For instance, 11.2% of the French are regular benzodiazepine consumers and 70% of the prescriptions are made out to them for as long as 5 years! No therapy has ever actually shown a satisfactory efficacy to treat the problem. The given elements converge to propose programmes of a psycho-educative kind.

As a result, this has led us to the conclusion that a protocol, which would be set up and supervised by university academics, ensured by trained psychologists with medical withdrawal follow-up to be carried out within the spa therapy, could well allow withdrawal from this medication. The spa therapy, through its proven anxiolytic activity, is able to favour the substituting of treatment by benzodiazepine, and as a result would make withdrawal easier.

We propose here to set out the psycho-educative protocol with the support of an experiment on 73 patients, carried out in 2010 and 2011 in France together with the results of this study.