

Oregon's Drug Review:

Evidence on Skeletal Muscle Relaxers

Muscle relaxers treat both muscle spasm and spasticity. These drugs relieve muscle spasms due to low back pain and neck pain. Muscle relaxers treat spasms due to fibromyalgia or tension headaches. These drugs also relieve spasticity due to cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, or stroke.

Which Drugs Were Included In This Review?

- This review did not cover diazepam (VALIUM).
- It did not include fixed combinations with other drugs.

<u>For Muscle Spasm</u>	<u>For Spasticity</u>
• carisoprodol (Rela, Soma)	• baclofen (Kemstro)
• chlorzoxazone (Parafon Forte DSC, Strifon Forte DSC)	• dantrolene (Dantrium)
• cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril)	• tizanidine (Zanaflex)
• metaxalone (Skelaxin)	
• methocarbamol (Robaxin)	
• orphenadrine (Norflex)	
• tizanidine (Zanaflex)	

What Do These Drugs Have In Common?

- Data is sparse on how effective these drugs are for muscle spasm.
- **Baclofen, dantrolene, and tizanidine** are equally effective for spasticity.
- Not enough data exists about muscle relaxers to show differences by age, race, or sex.

What Are the Key Differences Among These Drugs?

- **Cyclobenzaprine** has the most proof of being effective.
- **Carisoprodol** can be addictive. It is a controlled drug in Oregon.
- **Chlorzoxazone** and **dantrolene** are linked to rare fatal toxicity of the liver. **Tizanidine** requires ongoing testing of liver function.

Ask Your Health Care Practitioner During Your Next Visit:

- Am I taking the most effective drug for my condition?
- Are alternative drugs available that are equally effective?
- Are alternative drug available that are effective, but less costly?
- Is there a generic available for my brand name drug?
- Will this drug interact with other medications I take?

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