Prescribing Diazepam for fear of flying

Mosborough Health Centre have taken the decision not to prescribe Diazepam for fear of flying. There are many reasons for making this decision as outlined below.

1. Diazepam is a sedative. This means that this medication can make you drowsy and more relaxed. If there was an emergency during the flight, this could impair your concentration, reactions and ability to follow instructions. This could affect your safety and the safety of those around you.
2. Sedative drugs can make you fall sleep, however, when you sleep this is an unnatural non-REM sleep. This means that you will not move around as much as you would if you fell asleep naturally. This can increase the risk of blood clots affecting the legs (Deep Vein Thrombosis) and lungs (Pulmonary Embolism). These are dangerous and can be life threatening. The risk of developing a clot increases with longer flight times (more than 4 hours).
3. For most people diazepam is a sedative, however, it can have the opposite effect and result in aggression. It can also cause disinhibition, where you would act differently to normal. This could impact on your safety and the safety of other passengers and get you into trouble with the law.
4. National prescribing guidelines followed by doctors don’t allow the use of benzodiazepines in cases of phobia. **Any doctor prescribing diazepam for a fear of flying would be taking a significant legal risk as this goes against these guidelines.** Benzodiazepines are only licensed for short-term use in a crisis in generalised anxiety. If this is the problem you suffer with, you should seek proper care and support for your mental health, and it would not be advisable to go on a flight.
5. Diazepam and similar controlled drugs are illegal in a number of countries. They may be confiscated or you may find yourself in trouble with the police.
6. Diazepam has a long half-life (36 to 200 hours). This is the time it takes for the amount of a drug’s active substance in your body to reduce by half. This could result in you failing a drug test if you are subjected to such testing as is required in some jobs.
7. It is important to declare all medical conditions and medications that you take to your travel insurer. If not, there is a risk of nullifying any insurance policy you may have.

We do appreciate that a fear of flying very real, and can be frightening and debilitating. There are safer and more effective ways to tackle this problem, such as fear of flying courses. Please see some options listed below.

Fear of Flying courses

[Tips For Nervous Flyers | Advice For Nervous Flyers | Virgin Atlantic](https://flywith.virginatlantic.com/gb/en/wellbeing-and-health/flying-without-fear.html)

[Fear of flying course | Fearless Flyer (easyjet.com)](https://www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com/)

[Primary course | British Airways™ Fear of flying courses | Flying With Confidence](https://flyingwithconfidence.com/courses/primary)

Additional Information

[Overview | Generalised anxiety disorder and panic disorder in adults: management | Guidance | NICE](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg113)

[Can I take my medicine abroad? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/medicines/can-i-take-my-medicine-abroad/)

[NaTHNaC - Medicines and travel (travelhealthpro.org.uk)](https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad)