



## Patient Information “Fear of Flying”

**At Putneymead Group Medical Practice, from March 2023 we will not prescribe Diazepam or other sedative medication for patients who wish to use this for a fear of flying.**

We have several reasons why we have taken this decision:

1. Diazepam is a sedative. This means, the medication makes you sleepy and more relaxed. If there would be an emergency during the flight, this could impair your ability to concentrate, follow instructions, or react to the situation. This could seriously affect the safety of you and the people around you.
2. Sedative drugs can make you fall asleep, however, when you sleep it is an unnatural non-REM sleep. This means, your movements during sleep are reduced and this can place you at an increased risk of developing blood clots (DVT). These blood clots are very dangerous and can even prove fatal. This risk further increases if your flight is over 4 hours long.
3. Although most people respond to benzodiazepines like Diazepam with sedation, a small proportion experiences the opposite effect and can become aggressive. They can also lead to disinhibition and make you behave in ways you normally wouldn't. This could also impact on your safety and the safety of your fellow passengers or could lead you to get in trouble with the law.
4. National prescribing guidelines followed by doctors also don't recommend the use of benzodiazepines in cases of phobia. Any doctor prescribing a sedative for a fear of flying would be prescribing outside of these guidelines.
5. In several countries, diazepam and similar drugs are illegal. They would be confiscated, and you might find yourself in trouble with the police for being in possession of an illegal substance.
6. Diazepam has a long half-life. This means it stays in your system for a significant time and you may fail random drug testing if you are subjected to such testing as is required in some jobs.

We appreciate a fear of flying is very real and very frightening and can be debilitating. However, there are much better and effective ways of tackling the problem. We recommend you tackle your problem with a Fear of Flying Course, which is run by several airlines. These courses are far more effective than diazepam, they have none of the undesirable effects and the positive effects of the courses continue after the courses have been completed.

Fear of Flying Courses Easy Jet [www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com](http://www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com) Tel: 0203 8131644

British Airways <http://flyingwithconfidence.com/courses/venues> Tel: 01252 793 250

Virgin Atlantic <https://flyingwithoutfear.co.uk/collections> Tel: 01423 714900 1252250