

Prescribing Diazepam for Flight Anxiety

Having reviewed latest guidance, we will no longer be prescribing diazepam for fear of flying. Diazepam in the UK is a Class C/Schedule IV controlled drug. We have outlined below the reasons we will no longer be prescribing it for fear of flying. Patients are welcome to seek the opinion of a private GP if they still wish to request a prescription for this purpose. We would also advise speaking to your pharmacist about alternatives that can be bought over-the-counter.

You can find further information and useful courses in the links below.

[How to manage a fear of flying and flying anxiety | Patient](#)

<https://www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com/>

<https://www.britishairways.com/en-gb/information/travel-assistance/flying-with-confidence>

<https://www.flyingwithoutfear.com/>

[Air Travel - Fit for Travel](#)

Reasons for this policy:

1. The prescribing guidelines doctors follow (British National Formulary) advises 'the use of benzodiazepines (diazepam) to treat short-term 'mild' anxiety is inappropriate' and 'benzodiazepines should be used to treat insomnia only when it is severe, disabling, or causing the patient extreme distress.' Doctors would be taking a significant legal risk prescribing against these guidelines. Diazepam is only licensed short term for a crisis in generalised anxiety. Fear of flying on its own is not a generalised anxiety disorder.
2. Our contract with the NHS advises that an NHS prescription should not be provided for medication which is requested solely in anticipation of the onset of an ailment whilst outside the UK, but for which treatment is not required at the time of prescribing. It is therefore recommended that an NHS prescription is NOT PROVIDED for fear of flying.
3. Flight anxiety does not come under the remit of General Medical Services as defined in the GP contract.
4. Diazepam is a sedative and so can cause drowsiness, impair concentration and decision making. It should therefore not be taken by individuals who may be called upon to make important decisions (e.g. parents responsible for the care of young children or in case of an in-flight emergency).
5. Some countries do not allow the entry of certain types of medicines including diazepam, and others may have regulations requiring specific permission for a medication to be brought in – for further information see the NaTHNaC Travel Pro Website <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-and-travel>