

Patient Information Leaflet: Benzodiazepine Use For Fear Of Flying

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At Hadrian Health Centre, we do not prescribe Benzodiazepine (e.g. Diazepam) medication for Fear of Flying.

We understand that fear of flying can be very frightening and debilitating but there are a number of reasons why we do not prescribe these medications:

1. Benzodiazepines are sedating medications, which can make you more sleepy and drowsy. If there is an emergency situation on the flight, then this could impact your ability to understand instructions, follow them and react which could put your own safety and life at risk.
2. Rather than a sedative effect, a small number of people can become agitated and aggressive which could impact your safety and the safety of others on the aeroplane. This could also lead you to become in trouble with the police.
3. Benzodiazepines can cause you to fall into an unnatural sleep state where movements are reduced. This can increase your risk of developing blood clots of the legs and lungs which can be dangerous and even fatal. This risk increases further if flights are 4 hours or longer.
4. Benzodiazepines can reduce blood oxygen around the body due to the sedating effects, which can be dangerous. Blood oxygen is already reduced at high altitudes.
5. Benzodiazepines should not be mixed with alcohol, as alcohol is a sedative as well.
6. Benzodiazepines are controlled medications in the UK and need to be prescribed safely. According to the national guidelines doctors follow, benzodiazepines are not allowed to be prescribed for phobias or fears, this includes fear of flying. Benzodiazepines are only licensed for short term use in a crisis. In this situation, it would not be advisable to fly and further support would be recommended.
7. In some countries, Benzodiazepines are illegal and you may find yourself in trouble with the law for carrying an illegal substance.
8. Diazepam stays in your system for a long time so you may fail random drug testing if your job requires you to take a test.

If you wish to investigate further, a better, safer and effective way of tackling a fear of flying can be through courses, which a number of airlines offer.

Kind Regards,

Hadrian Health Centre Team

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