

Fear of Flying?

Due to potential risks and the availability of better alternatives the Vine Medical Centre does not prescribe for a fear of flying. Most medical practices no longer prescribe benzodiazepines like diazepam for a fear of flying.

These drugs can cause impaired cognitive function, which is dangerous in emergencies, and are associated with addiction and withdrawal symptoms. Fear of flying courses, therapy, and other strategies are often recommended instead.

Why prescribing is discouraged:

Safety Concerns:

Benzodiazepines can impair cognitive function, including concentration, memory, and reaction time, which can be dangerous in an emergency situation during a flight.

Legal Risks:

Prescribing benzodiazepines for phobias like fear of flying goes against national prescribing guidelines (BNF), potentially exposing the doctor to legal risks.

Potential for Misuse:

Benzodiazepines are known to be misused and can lead to addiction.

Long-term effects:

Long-term use of benzodiazepines has been linked to cognitive and balance problems.

International travel concerns:

Diazepam and similar drugs may be illegal or confiscated in some countries, causing problems for travellers.

Alternatives to medication:

Fear of Flying Courses:

These courses, offered by airlines and other organizations, often involve education about flying, exposure therapy, and relaxation techniques.

Therapy:

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and exposure therapy can help individuals address their fear of flying.

Relaxation Techniques:

Techniques like deep breathing, meditation, and mindfulness can help manage anxiety during flights.

Support Groups:

Connecting with others who experience fear of flying can provide support and encouragement.