

Thornton Medical Centre

We understand that fear of flying is a genuine and alarming issue. It can be incredibly challenging, and we want to support you in any way we can.

However, we have a policy of not routinely prescribing sedatives for fear of flying. The clinical team has made this decision to ensure your safety, and all prescribers in the practice adhere to it.

We know that you may have concerns about this policy, so we wanted to explain the reasons behind it. Diazepam, a common sedative, can cause drowsiness and relaxation. While this might seem helpful during a flight, it can also impair your ability to respond to an emergency. This could have serious safety implications for you and others on your flight.

Furthermore, sedative drugs can cause non-REM sleep, which can increase the risk of developing a blood clot in the leg or lung. Blood clots can be fatal, and the risk is even higher during long flights. Additionally, while benzodiazepines like diazepam usually cause sedation, some people may experience paradoxical agitation and aggression, which could put you and others at risk.

We want to assure you that our doctors follow prescribing guidelines to ensure your safety. Benzodiazepines are contraindicated in phobia, and prescribing them against these guidelines could put our doctors at legal risk. These drugs are only licensed for short-term use in cases of crisis, and it is important to receive proper care and support for your mental health.

We suggest that you consider enrolling in a Fear of Flying course run by the airlines. We have listed some options below that you may find helpful. We hope that you understand our policy and appreciate our commitment to your safety and well-being.

Easy Jet www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com Tel 0203 8131644

British Airways www.flyingwithconfidence.com Tel 01252 793250

Virgin www.flyingwithoutfear.co.uk Tel 01423 714900

Patients who still wish to take benzodiazepines for flight anxiety are advised to consult with a private GP or travel clinic.

It is important to declare all medical conditions and medications you take to your travel insurer. If not, there is a risk of nullifying any insurance policy you may have.