

Fear of Flying Practice Position

In response to a medical safety advisory from aviation-trained physicians, we have made the decision to stop prescribing sedative medications, such as Diazepam and Zopiclone, which are sometimes used to address fear of flying. There are several reasons behind this decision:

1. Both Diazepam and Zopiclone act as sedatives, inducing relaxation and drowsiness. However, in the event of an emergency during flight, this could impede your ability to concentrate, follow instructions, and respond appropriately. Such impairment poses not only personal risks but also could jeopardise the safety of fellow passengers.
2. Sedative drugs may lead to an unnatural non-REM sleep pattern, reducing movement and increasing the risk of developing blood clots, particularly deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or pulmonary embolism, especially on flights exceeding four hours in duration. Blood clots present severe health hazards and can be fatal.
3. While most individuals experience sedation with Diazepam, some people may exhibit agitation and aggression. These medications can induce disinhibition, prompting behaviour outside one's normal demeanour, potentially endangering personal safety and leading to legal repercussions. This can be similar to alcohol-induced incidents, resulting in flight removal or legal issues.
4. The British National Formulary (BNF), the prescribing guidelines doctors follow in the UK, explicitly prohibits the use of benzodiazepines for treating phobias. Prescribing against these guidelines poses legal risks for healthcare providers.
5. Diazepam and similar drugs are illegal in several countries, subjecting travellers to potential confiscation or legal consequences. In light of these considerations and to prioritise passenger safety and well-being, as a practice we are opting for alternative approaches to address fear of flying that do not compromise aviation safety or legal compliance. This is the same for many GP surgeries.

We appreciate that this is a very real and frightening problem for some people. We recommend that you tackle the problem with a Fear of Flying Course, which is run by several airlines.

British Airways: [Flying with Confidence | Special assistance | British Airways](#)

Virgin: [How to cope with a fear of flying | Virgin](#)

EasyJet: [Courses | Fearless Flyer \(easyjet.com\)](#)