

Sedatives for Dental Treatment, Medical Procedures and Scans

We understand that undergoing dental treatment, medical procedures or scans can cause significant anxiety for some patients. However, we are unable to provide prescriptions for sedative medications, such as diazepam, for procedures being arranged by other healthcare providers.

Why We Do Not Prescribe Sedatives for These Situations

Diazepam and similar medications belong to a group of drugs called benzodiazepines. They work by reducing anxiety and causing sedation, which may seem helpful when facing a procedure that causes worry or distress. However, these medications can also cause a range of side effects and potential risks, including:

- Drowsiness and reduced alertness
- Dizziness and impaired coordination
- Reduced judgement and slower reaction times
- An increased risk of falls and accidents
- Occasional unexpected reactions, such as agitation, restlessness or aggression
- Dependence and tolerance, if used repeatedly over time

Safe Prescribing and Monitoring

When a sedative is required for a dental procedure, scan or other medical treatment, it is important that the healthcare professional carrying out the procedure is aware of any medication being used and is able to assess whether it is appropriate, safe and necessary. The team performing the procedure is best placed to:

- Assess the level of anxiety and the need for sedation
- Consider any risks related to the procedure itself
- Check for interactions with other medications or medical conditions
- Monitor the effects of any sedative medication before, during and after the procedure

For these reasons, it is generally considered safest for the clinician undertaking the procedure to prescribe or arrange any sedation that may be required.

Dental Treatment

Dentists are qualified prescribers and can assess whether sedation is appropriate for dental treatment. If you feel you may require sedation for a dental procedure, please discuss this directly with your dentist.

Hospital Procedures and Scans

If you are attending hospital for a scan, investigation or procedure and are concerned about anxiety or claustrophobia, please contact the hospital department responsible for your care. The requesting clinician or team carrying out the procedure can assess whether sedation is appropriate and make any necessary arrangements.

If you have any concerns about a scan, investigation, or procedure that has been recommended by a clinician at Kelty Medical Practice, please speak to that clinician directly. You can discuss at the time of referral or arrange a pre-bookable telephone

appointment if you would like further advice before proceeding. Please be aware that the daily triage service is not intended for discussions related to whether sedation is required, and such requests will not be accepted through this route.

Our Practice Policy

In line with safe prescribing principles, Kelty Medical Practice does not prescribe diazepam or other sedative medications for dental treatment, scans or medical procedures arranged by other healthcare providers.

We will not discuss the prescribing of diazepam or other sedative medications for scans or medical procedures that we are arranging via the daily triage system. Such discussions should take place at the point of referral, or via a pre-booked telephone appointment.

If anxiety is affecting your day-to-day life more generally, we would be happy to discuss appropriate support and treatment options with you.

Fear of Flying and Diazepam

We understand that a fear of flying can be a very distressing experience. However, we do not prescribe diazepam or similar sedative medications for fear of flying for several important reasons.

Safety during a flight

Diazepam is a sedative that can cause drowsiness and reduce alertness. In the event of an emergency, it may impair your ability to respond quickly, follow instructions, and react appropriately, potentially putting both you and other passengers at risk.

Increased risk of blood clots

Although diazepam may help you sleep; the sleep it produces is not the same as natural sleep. It can reduce movement during a flight, increasing the risk of developing a deep vein thrombosis (DVT), particularly on journeys longer than four hours. In some cases, blood clots can travel to the lungs and become life-threatening.

Unexpected reactions

While most people become sleepy after taking diazepam some experience the opposite effect, such as agitation, aggression, or disinhibited behaviour. This can affect your safety, the safety of those around you, and could potentially lead to legal consequences.

Prescribing guidance

National prescribing guidelines advise that benzodiazepines, including diazepam, should not be used to treat specific phobias such as fear of flying. These medications are licensed only for short-term use in certain anxiety-related conditions and are not considered an appropriate treatment for flight anxiety.

Legal considerations when travelling

Diazepam and similar medications are controlled or prohibited in some countries.

Carrying them abroad may result in the medication being confiscated or could lead to difficulties with local authorities.

Impact on drug testing

Diazepam can remain in the body for several days after use and may result in a positive drug test. This could be important if your employment involves routine or random drug screening.

Alternative Support

We recognise that fear of flying is a genuine and challenging problem. Rather than relying on medication, we encourage patients to consider dedicated fear of flying programmes offered by many airlines. These courses are designed to address the underlying anxiety and provide practical coping strategies, often with long-term benefits.

We have provided links to some of these courses below:

[Easy Jet](#)

[British Airways](#)

[Virgin](#)

Kelty Medical Practice
July 2026