**Request for sedatives for anxiety related to dental procedures or claustrophobia related to diagnostic scanners (e.g. MRI or CT)**

**We are unable to prescribe sedatives, such as diazepam, for any procedure or scan being undertaken outside of Sheet Street Surgery, this includes MRI scans, dental procedures.**

If you feel you need sedation in such circumstances, please speak to the team undertaking the procedure or scan, as they are responsible for providing this if needed.

* Sedatives are medicines which make patients sleepy and relaxed. There are several reasons why healthcare practitioners at Sheet Street surgery do not prescribe these medicines for procedures outside of our practice:
* GPs are not trained to provide the correct level of sedation for these procedures.
* The sedatives can provide too little sedation which will not help you or can provide too much sedation can make you too sleepy, which could lead to the procedure being cancelled. Too much sedation can dangerously affect your breathing. After taking a sedative for a procedure or scan, you will need to be closely monitored to keep you safe.
* Generally, diazepam makes most people who take it sleepy, in some rare situations it can have an opposite effect and make people aggressive or agitated.
* Scans and hospital procedures are often delayed, therefore the team performing he procedure or scan should provide the sedation, to ensure you become sleepy and relaxed at the right time.

**Request for sedative for Travel**

**We are unable to prescribe sedatives such as diazepam for jet lag and flight anxiety for patient safety.**

* Although emergencies in the air are a rare occurrence, there are concerns that the reduced awareness and reaction times of people taking a sedative would pose a risk if they were not able to act in a manner which could save their life in the event of an onboard emergency such as one necessitating evacuation.
* There are concerns that in some cases people taking a benzodiazepine (diazepam) may become unexpectedly more agitated and violent, which can pose a risk on the plane. A similar effect can be seen with alcohol, which has led to people being removed from flights.
* The sedating effects can reduce respiratory function which has the potential to be life threatening, particularly if combined with alcohol. This risk has the potential to be further heightened by the effects of the lower oxygen environment when flying at altitude.
* The use of benzodiazepines has the potential to increase the risk of deep vein thrombosis due to reduced movement.
* For some countries it is illegal to import benzodiazepines and so the passenger will need to use a different strategy for the homeward bound journey and / or any subsequent legs of the journey.
* The aviation industry recommends flight anxiety courses for people with fear of flying. These are run by several major airlines and sometimes by local airports.