



KETAMINE WORKBOOK

EDAS/REACH YOUNG PEOPLES DRUG & ALCOHOL SERVICES

This workbook is for completion on your own or with support.

**Speak to your keyworker if you feel you may need support
with this workbook. They will be able to advise
on the best person to help.**

What you need to know...



Ketamine, also known as K or Special K, is a '**dissociative anaesthetic**' (not a tranquilliser) that numbs the body and creates the effect of removing you from your sense of reality.

Ketamine is used in medicine as an anesthetic for humans and animals.

When used illegally to get high, ketamine is usually snorted but is also occasionally injected.

Effects of taking ketamine are influenced by your mood and environment.

When sold illegally, it generally comes as a grainy white or light brown powder. It looks similar to cocaine but is a very different drug. It can also be made into pills or dissolved in a liquid, although this is less common.

Ketamine tastes bitter and unpleasant.

Dosage

- In **smaller doses**, you might feel a little bit tipsy and a bit wobbly on your feet... (15-30 mg)
- A **medium dose** might produce psychedelic effects (30-75 mg)
- **Higher doses** can result in what is known as a **k-hole** (150+ mg)

1 gram might be split into around 30 average doses



Different names for Ketamine

Special K, K, Ket, Kitkat, Super K, Horse Trank, Donkey Dust, Green K, Vitamin K, Wonk

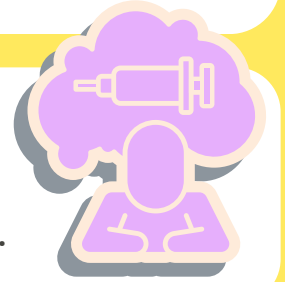
Ways of Taking It...

By Snorting It As A Powder

Most people who take powder ketamine will snort it. Users often talk of taking a 'bump', meaning they snort a small amount of ketamine. In the UK, snorting is the most common way to take ketamine.

By Injecting It

People who regularly use ketamine sometimes inject it to get a bigger hit. They usually inject ketamine into a muscle.



By Swallowing It As A Tablet

Some people swallow it in tablet form, but this is less common.

By Bombing

Some people 'bomb' it, which is swallowing the powder wrapped in a cigarette paper.

Duration of Effects

How long the effects last and the drug stays in your system depends on how much you've taken, your size, and what other drugs you may have also taken.

When **snorted**, ketamine normally takes about 15 minutes to take effect. When taken **orally**, it will take longer, around 20 minutes to an hour.

The **buzz** can last around for 30 minutes to an hour, but the effects really depend on how much you take.





Ketamine and You

Why did you first start to use ketamine?

Why did you continue to use it?

Does your using ketamine put your health at risk? If so, how?

How does your ketamine use affect you financially?



The Law

True or False

How much do you know?

CLASSIFICATION OF KETAMINE:

Ketamine is a class 'B' drug

TRUE / FALSE

PRODUCTION OF KETAMINE:

The production of ketamine is illegal in the UK

TRUE / FALSE

PERSONAL CONSUMPTION:

It is legal to possess ketamine for personal use only

TRUE / FALSE

IF YOU ARE CAUGHT CARRYING:

You can get up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both

TRUE / FALSE

IF YOU BUY KETAMINE:

If you buy ketamine for yourself or your friends and get caught you cannot be charged for supplying a class 'B' drug

TRUE / FALSE

IF YOU GIVE A 'BUMP', PILL, ETC:

You can be charged with supplying if you get caught giving a friend a bump or pill of ketamine

TRUE / FALSE

IN YOUR HOUSE:

If you allow your friend or acquaintance to consume ketamine in your house for their personal use you will not be expected to face legal proceedings if you get caught

TRUE / FALSE

THE PENALTY FOR POSSESSION:

The maximum penalty for possession of ketamine is 5 years in prison

TRUE / FALSE

THE PENALTY FOR SUPPLYING:

The maximum penalty for supplying ketamine is 10 years in prison

TRUE / FALSE

Check your answers at the back of the workbook!

The Effects of Ketamine

Ketamine is a **general anaesthetic** so it reduces sensations in the body. It creates an apparent detachment of the mind from the body.

It can make people seem slower, **more relaxed, and chilled out**, but it can also stop people from being able to move properly (**paralysis**) and from making sense.



Taking ketamine can make you feel

- dream-like and detached
- chilled, relaxed, and happy
- confused and clumsy
- an increased heart rate and blood pressure
- slurred speech and blurred vision
- anxious, panicked, and violent
- nauseated or make you vomit

Ketamine can also...

- alter your perception of time and space and make you hallucinate (see or hear things that aren't there)
- stop you feeling pain, putting you at risk of hurting yourself and not realising it

What is a K-Hole?

If you take too much ketamine you **may lose the ability to move and go into a 'k-hole'**. This feels like your mind and body have separated and you can't seem to do anything about it – which can be a very scary experience.



Did you know?

It is not the drugs that get you high, it is your own brain chemicals.

Drugs release strong waves of your own brain chemicals, this is what we 'feel'.



Ketamine affects everyone differently, based on:

- size, weight and health
- whether the person is used to taking it
- whether other drugs are taken around the same time
- the amount taken
- the strength of the drug (varies from batch to batch)



Ketamine and You

How does ketamine make you feel? Circle the ones that apply to you and add any others you would like:

Happy

Relaxed

Detached

Dream-like

It can also have physical and behavioural effects. Do any one of the following happen to you? Tick them if they do:

- make you feel confused and/or clumsy
- make you feel nauseated
- make it feel like you can't move
- make you anxious and panicky
- make you hallucinate
- make you have issues remembering things
- make you get violent
- make you feel detached from your body ('falling into a k-hole')

Ketamine affects people differently, but most users become:

- chilled out
- dream-like and detached
- happy and relaxed

Does this happen to you?

- Yes No

Some people become:

- agitated
- confused
- anxious
- nauseated
- violent

Does this happen to you?

- Yes No





Ketamine and You

The high is usually short-lived. The more you use, the highs become less and the comedown gets bigger. Is this true for you? Explain the effects you experience from using.

Have you become more prone to depression, lack of confidence, experience more mood swings, and low self-esteem as your use increased? Please explain how you have changed since you started using.

Does your thinking become distorted the more you use? Please explain your answer.





Ketamine and You

Has using ketamine affected your health so far? If so, how?

Ketamine may start out as a sociable drug but can develop into a habit. Did this happen to you? If so, how did it develop to become a habit?

How easy do you think it was/ will be to give up ketamine? Why do you think this was/is the case?

Did you become addicted quickly and were you surprised by this? If so, why?

Side Effects & Risks



Physical Health Risks

Ketamine is a very powerful anesthetic that can cause serious harm. Taking ketamine can be fatal, particularly if it is mixed with other drugs.



HEART PROBLEMS

Ketamine can increase your heart rate and blood pressure.

LIVER DAMAGE

Evidence of liver damage due to regular, heavy ketamine use is emerging.



K CRAMPS

Abdominal pain, sometimes called 'K cramps', have been reported by people who have taken ketamine for a long time.

RISK OF INJURY

Because you don't feel pain properly when you've recently taken ketamine, you can injure yourself and not realise it.

KETAMINE BLADDER SYNDROME

Ketamine can cause serious bladder problems, with the urgent and frequent need to pee. This can be very painful and the pee can be blood-stained. Although stopping using ketamine can help, **sometimes the damage can be so serious that the bladder needs surgical repair or even removal.**

- **The urinary tract, from the kidneys down to the bladder, can also be affected and incontinence (uncontrolled peeing) may also develop.**



PARALYSIS AND LOSS OF FEELING

Ketamine produces a feeling of paralysis in which the user is fully conscious and can see but cannot move or speak. Because of the body's loss of feelings, paralysis of the muscles, and the mind's loss of touch with reality, you can be left vulnerable to hurting yourself or being hurt by others.

Mental Health Risks

DEPRESSION AND PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS

Regular use can cause depression and anxiety, and occasionally, psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations. Ketamine can also make existing mental health problems worse.

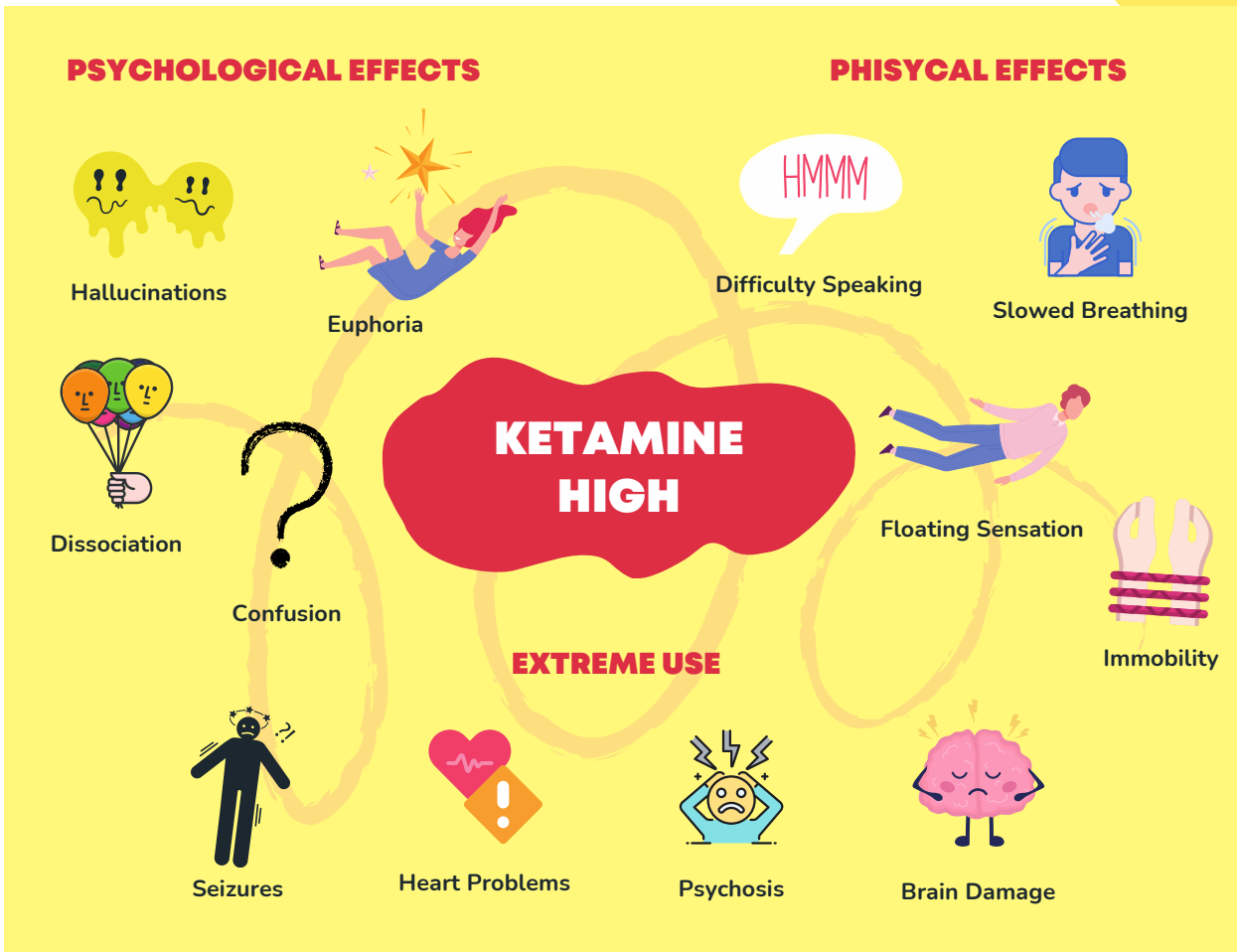


MEMORY ISSUES

Ketamine can cause damage to your short and long-term memory. The longer-term effects of ketamine use can include flashbacks, memory loss and problems with concentration.



Ketamine and You



Have you experienced any of these effects due to ketamine use? Please explain which.

Do you have any concerns about your health after learning about these risks?





Ketamine and You

Consequences of Use

The consequences of using ketamine are usually the reason why people start thinking that they need to give it up. These consequences will differ from person to person but can range from it costing too much money to serious illness.

If you use a drug like ketamine for any length of time there will be consequences and these can get worse the longer that you do.

What are the consequences of continued use of ketamine with regards to yourself?

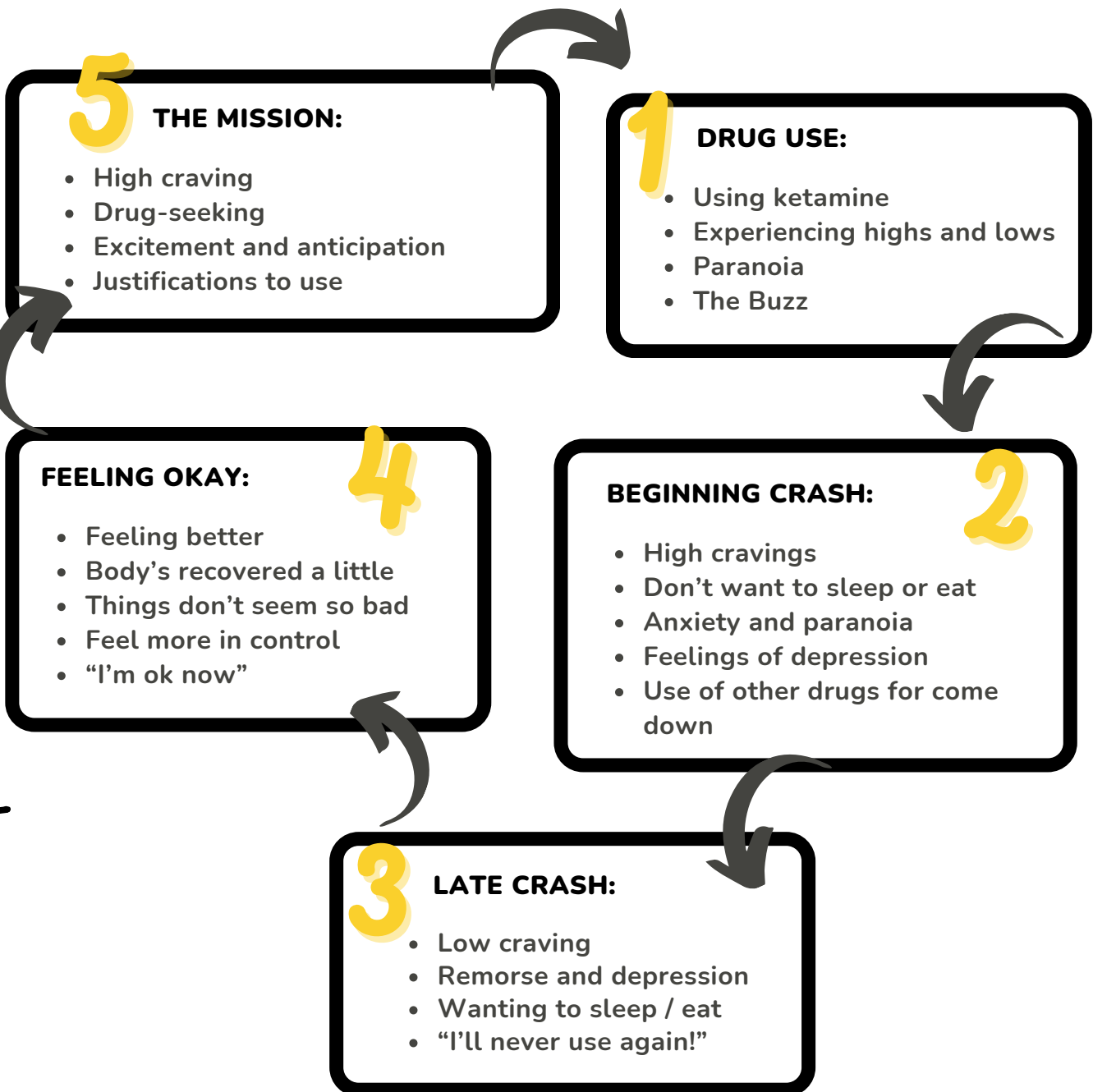
What are the consequences of continued use of ketamine with regards to other people?

What can you do to help overcome these consequences?



The Cycle of Use

Most habits usually develop into a cycle, which is similar to a washing machine cycle (wash, rinse, spin, and back to wash again). Heavy ketamine users often get cravings and find it hard not to take the drug.



You may bounce between the first two stages all night, or for days, but eventually, you will move through the cycle. If you want to give up ketamine, you have to interrupt this cycle, usually between feeling okay and the mission.

Cravings and Urges



Cravings or 'hanging out' are strong urges to use ketamine. They are normal. Almost everyone who stops or cuts down their use or can't get any ketamine for some reason has some cravings. **Can you think of a time when you were really craving to take it?**

Cravings tend to happen in events or situations that you have previously associated with using or 'triggers'. Examples of 'triggers' could be: experiencing a particular emotion, specific people or places, a particular time of day, boredom, and isolation.

Cravings only get stronger if you give in and 'feed' them. They will eventually weaken, die down and go away if you don't give in to them.

You may have noticed that cravings tend to last only a short time. **Have there been times when you couldn't take ketamine when you had a strong urge to do it? Did the urge pass?**

The key point is that cravings generally last between 30–60 minutes. This is true for everybody, but few people give themselves the chance to prove it.

Handling Cravings/Urges

Urges usually come and go in waves and so it is important to ride them out. This is called **urge surfing**. Imagine you are a surfer on a board riding a wave – you need to stay on that board and ride that wave until it subsides without falling off. Therefore, if your urges feel intense, try to distract yourself for a little while and you will soon notice that the worst part has passed. Each time you overcome a craving, it makes the craving weaker next time and makes you stronger as your technique for resisting improves. Knowing that they are short-term will help you handle them. If you ride them out, they will weaken.

If your cravings are feeling strong try:

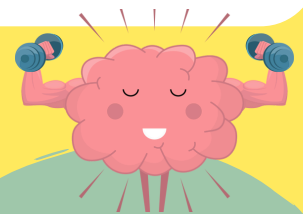
Distracting: do something unrelated to using.

Delaying: check the time and make a deal with yourself not to use for at least half an hour.

De-stressing: it's important to take time to relax and unwind, e.g. have a bath, walk, or listen to music.

Keeping the craving in perspective: don't get carried away.

Remember the negatives: often when having cravings people tend to remember only the positive effects of taking ketamine and forget the negatives.



You win every time you beat your craving. It makes the craving weaker next time and makes you more confident you can resist to use.



Ketamine and You

Triggers & High-Risk Situations

Another useful strategy for handling cravings/urges is to avoid situations with strong personal triggers.

Triggers are feelings or events that cause strong thoughts about wanting to take ketamine. They can be internal (certain moods or feelings) or external (sitting down to watch TV, listening to music, or having a visit from friends).

High-risk situations include times and places where you usually take ketamine. For example, if you usually do it with certain friends, then you will probably feel like a doing it whenever you are with them.

What are your internal (thoughts and feelings) high-risk situations and triggers?
e.g. bored, stressed, angry...

What are your external (situations and places) high-risk situations and triggers?
e.g. someone offers me a some ketamine, seeing my friends use ketamine, watching a video



Withdrawal Symptoms

Although not everyone gets them, you may get some withdrawal symptoms after you stop taking ketamine. These can be uncomfortable but are not dangerous.

Giving up ketamine after a long time is challenging because the body has to get used to functioning without it. Please seek advice from a health professional.

Psychological Symptoms

- **cravings for ketamine**
- **nightmares**
- **anxiety**
- **depression**
- **confusion**
- **anger**
- **trouble concentrating**
- **finding it hard to eat and sleep**



Physical Symptoms

- **no appetite**
- **tiredness**
- **chills**
- **sweating**
- **restlessness**
- **tremors**
- **irregular and rapid heartbeat**
- **risk of injury**



During any period of withdrawal, it's important to look after yourself: eat well and drink plenty of water, get a bit of exercise, try and get some regular sleep.

The techniques of distraction, delay and de-stressing can be helpful ways of dealing with symptoms (p. 14). Try to keep them in perspective.

Have you experienced any of these symptoms due to ketamine withdrawal?

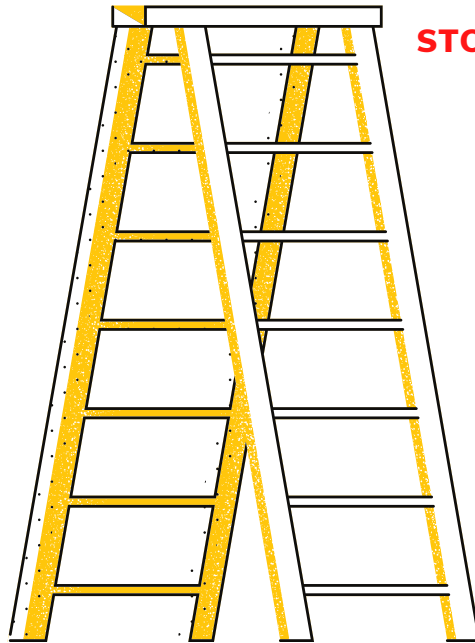
How did you manage or how do you plan to manage these symptoms?





Ketamine and You

THE LADDER OF CHANGE



STOP USING

CONTROL USING

CONTINUE AS NORMAL

Where do you see yourself on the ladder?

Where would you like to be on the ladder and why?

How will you get there?



Ketamine and You

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Using this **Decision-Making Model** you can learn to think through all aspects of why you are making a decision to change or to not change.

The purpose of this model is for you to **become more aware** than you may be now so that you can make an **'informed choice.'** Having a choice is really important because it means that you have real power in your life.

You can easily learn how to change things that aren't so good for you and take responsibility for your actions.

List the **POSITIVES** of taking ketamine
(e.g. what are the benefits and rewards for taking it)

List the **NEGATIVES** of taking ketamine
(e.g. what don't you like about it during or afterwards, what bad consequences happen)

List the **POSITIVES** of **NOT** taking ketamine
(e.g. what **do** you like about **not** taking it)

List the **NEGATIVES** of **NOT** taking ketamine
(e.g. what **don't** you like about **not** taking it or what bad things happen)



Ketamine and You

CHANGE PLAN SHEET

What do I want to change (this could be anything!)	
The reasons I want to do this are:	
To do this, I will need to take these actions	
People who could support me in this area	
What are my possible obstacles to change?	
How will I deal with obstacles?	
I will know my plan is working when....	



Reduce the Risks

MAKE SAFE



The only risk-free drug use is no drug use, but if you are using, or considering using ketamine, this advice will help **minimise** the risks to your health.

Don't Mix With Other Drugs

Every time you mix drugs together you take on new risks.

If you mix ketamine with other drugs, particularly **depressant** drugs like **alcohol**, **benzodiazepines**, or **opiates**, you risk collapsing, passing out, and/or seriously injuring yourself. You could also choke, especially if you vomit.

Ketamine can also be very dangerous when mixed with ecstasy or amphetamine (speed), as it can cause high blood pressure.



If you take lots of ketamine and mix it with other drugs you could die.

Drink Spiking

Ketamine has been used in drink spiking due to its inhibiting and amnesiac effects that can put a person at risk of sexual assault, rape, or theft.



Addiction

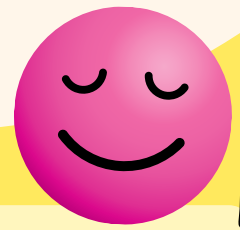
People who use ketamine regularly can develop a tolerance to it, which could lead to them taking even more to get the effects they're looking for.

Stay in Control with this advice:

- If injecting or snorting, don't share equipment
- Always use a clean preparation surface
- Alternate injecting sites
- Use clean tourniquets and don't share
- Don't use it if you are epileptic as using can cause epileptic fits
- Don't mix with other drugs or alcohol
- Always have drug free days
- Paranoia and delusions are common so limit how often you use
- Never use alone or somewhere unsafe
- Plan a safe way home in advance of a night out
- If you get depressed or constantly anxious, seek help
- Use can cause urinary tract infections, drink lots of water
- Don't snort off toilet facilities, they use harsh chemicals to clean them
- It causes loss of coordination; you may be more accident-prone
- Avoid long-lasting stomach pain by not swallowing the drug
- Be aware of K-Bladder, it could ruin your urinary system for life
- Avoid eating at least 3 hours before use in case of vomiting



Relapse Prevention



'Relapses' and 'slips'

A **relapse** is when you return to your old level of ketamine use. A **slip** is a 'one-off' case of using once, which does not necessarily mean you will have a full relapse.

It is quite common to make mistakes when you begin learning a new skill. Changing your ketamine use is no different, and you may make the odd mistake.

If you do have a slip it is important to remember that this doesn't mean you have failed, or you are unable to change or can let yourself slip into a full relapse. What is important to long-term success is how you handle the slip. How to handle it will depend on how it happened. The slip may have been intentional or unintentional.

Intentional Slips

Slips can happen 'on purpose' for a couple of reasons. You may tell yourself that you are tired of sticking to your plan and want a night off. Or you may decide that you deserve a reward (to use once) for what you've achieved so far, or it is just too hard. If this happens to you, think carefully about your reasons for wanting to change.

- consider your reasons for changing. How important are these to you?
- remind yourself that each slip reduces your chances of long-term success. Your craving will return more strongly, which means more hard work

Unintentional Slips

You may have a slip, despite your best intentions, because you find yourself in a high-risk situation with your guard down. If you do, look at your strategies to see what can be improved.

- did you just slip into an old habit again without thinking?
- are you finding some high-risk situations too hard right now?
- is there a better way of dealing with them?

Plan ahead for dealing with a slip

A slip can feel like a crisis and getting back to your chosen goal will take some effort. Here are some things to do.

If you have a slip you can:

- **get rid of the ketamine and get away from the situation where you used**
- **remind yourself that one use or even a day of using doesn't have to result in a full-blown relapse**
- **remember that feelings of guilt or blame will pass**
- **call for help from someone you trust**
- **look at the slip to see what triggers there were and your reaction to them**
- **think about what you expected ketamine to change or provide**
- **set up a plan for coping with similar situations in the future**

The Law

True or False

ANSWERS

CLASSIFICATION OF KETAMINE:

Ketamine is a class 'B' drug

TRUE

PRODUCTION OF KETAMINE:

The production of ketamine is illegal in the UK

TRUE

PERSONAL CONSUMPTION:

It is legal to possess ketamine for personal use only

FALSE
It is illegal

IF YOU ARE CAUGHT CARRYING:

You can get up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both

TRUE

IF YOU BUY KETAMINE:

If you buy ketamine for yourself or your friends and get caught you cannot be charged for supplying a class 'B' drug

FALSE
You could be charged

IF YOU GIVE A 'BUMP', PILL, ETC:

You can be charged with supplying if you get caught giving a friend a bump or pill of ketamine

TRUE

IN YOUR HOUSE:

If you allow your friend or acquaintance to consume ketamine in your house for their personal use you will not be expected to face legal proceedings if you get caught

FALSE
You could be charged

THE PENALTY FOR POSSESSION:

The maximum penalty for possession of ketamine is 5 years in prison

TRUE
You can also be fined

THE PENALTY FOR SUPPLYING:

The maximum penalty for supplying ketamine is 10 years in prison

FALSE
You can get up to 14 years, an unlimited fine or both

How many did you get right?

Need Support?

For further support and advice contact the **EDAS/Reach Young Peoples team. We are here to help!**

We are a specialist free and confidential alcohol and drugs support service for under 25s living in the county of Dorset. We offer non-judgemental advice and information about how to keep safe and discuss potential treatment and support options.

Get in touch with us on 01202 741414 or 0800 0434656 - option 2.



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