

Ketamine

How does it make you feel?

Ketamine is a general anaesthetic so it reduces sensations in the body. Trips can last for a couple of hours.

Taking ketamine can make you feel:

- dream-like and detached
- chilled, relaxed and happy
- confused and nauseated

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

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 do anything about it – which can be a very scary experience.

Regular ketamine use can cause:

- agitation
- panic attacks
- damage to short- and long-term memory
- depression, if taken frequently

Physical health risks

- Ketamine is a very powerful anaesthetic that can cause serious harm. Taking ketamine can be fatal, particularly if it is mixed with other drugs.
- The urinary tract, from the kidneys down to the bladder, can also be affected and incontinence (uncontrolled peeing) may also develop.
- Abdominal pain, sometimes called 'K cramps', have been reported by people who have taken ketamine for a long time.
- Evidence of liver damage due to regular, heavy ketamine use is emerging. The liver has a range of important functions, such as cleaning your blood and removing toxic substances.

Mental health risks

- The longer term effects of ketamine use can include flashbacks, memory loss and problems with concentration.
- Regular use can cause depression and, occasionally, psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations. Ketamine can also make existing mental health problems worse.
- Interestingly, medical grade ketamine is now being researched as a potential treatment for severe depression, but it is too early to know the results of this research.

What is ketamine cut with?

Street ketamine is usually sold as a white/beige crystallised powder and is sometimes cut with other powders to add weight and improve the dealer's profits.

It's impossible to tell whether the ketamine you buy has been cut with other substances by looking at it.

Can you get addicted?

Yes. People who become addicted to ketamine will keep taking it – whether they're aware of the health risks or not. Others will attend drug treatment services to help them stop.

- This is a Class B drug, which means it's illegal to have for yourself, give away or sell.
- Possession can get you up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- Supplying someone else, even your friends, can get you up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.