

# Ketamine



## Contact Us

Please contact us for further information.

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# What is Ketamine?

Ketamine is a powerful dissociative anesthetic that acts as a sedative and can also have hallucinogenic properties. It was originally developed and legally manufactured as a surgical anesthetic, often used by veterinarians.

However, it is increasingly being used for non-medical, recreational purposes as a “club drug”. Recreational use in clubs and raves has been on the rise over the past 10 years.

## What does it look like?

Ketamine is usually found in pill form, but it can also be available as a powder, liquid, tablet, capsule or crystals. Ketamine is otherwise known as;

- Bump
- Kit Kat
- Special K
- Jet
- “K”
- Cat Valium
- Vitamin K

## Who uses it?

- Legally available only to medical doctors and veterinarians
- Illicit use primarily among young people (18-24), at nightclubs, raves and all-night dance parties
- In 2011, 1.3% of Ontario high school students reported any lifetime use of ketamine (down from 2.2% in 1999), and 0.9% reported using it within the past year.
- Ketamine has been found in 1.1% of youth sexual assault cases – this is probably an underestimate as many victims are never tested for illicit substances

## What are the effects?

Ketamine use can be highly dangerous when combined with other drugs and can result in overdose requiring immediate medical attention.

### Short term:

- Floating, out-of-body sensations
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Twitches and spasms

### Long term:

- Cognitive impairment
- Memory loss
- Impaired verbal skills
- Paranoia
- Panic attacks
- Depression

## How can I get help?

- Ketamine is not thought to be physically addicting and lacks a clear withdrawal syndrome, but psychological dependence and tolerance develop with chronic, heavy use.
- Treatment can include any of the recognized efficacious interventions for substance abuse, including:
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)
- 12-Step programs
- Relapse prevention support
- Medication