



Ketamine Fact Sheet

What is Ketamine?

Ketamine is a dissociative general anesthetic with hypnotic, stimulant, and hallucinogenic qualities. It is used in some medical applications, but is more commonly used by veterinarians as a surgical anesthesia for animals.

What does it look like?

Ketamine, in its most common form, is a clear liquid. However, it can also be in a white or off white powder form.

What does it do?

Ketamine can produce drowsiness, confusion, high blood pressure, motor skill impairment, dizziness, disorientation, hallucinations, agitation, reduced or loss of consciousness, and potentially fatal respiratory failure in very little time after ingestion, depending on the method used. Because of its dissociative effect, you may feel detached from your body and/or your surroundings. This effect is called “conscious sedation.” You know what is happening, but are unable to do anything about it. It can also produce depression and amnesia. When mixed with alcohol, Ketamine can be even more dangerous. The effects of Ketamine can last up to an hour.



Where do people get it?

Since it is legal in the US, it is purchased directly from manufacturers by approved medical and veterinary facilities. Most of the Ketamine on the street was either stolen or diverted. Thieves break into veterinary or medical clinics to steal it or simply steal the packages as they are shipped from the manufacturer.

How do people use it?

Ketamine is referred to as a “date rape drug” and a “club drug.” Many times, it is used in perpetrating sexual assault and rape. The most common scenarios for the use of this drug take place at parties and bars. Perpetrators slip the liquid or powdered form of the drug into victims’ drinks where it is odorless, colorless, and tasteless. The liquid can also be injected or used to soak cigarettes or joints. The powder can be snorted, smoked, or injected when dissolved.

What are some of Ketamine’s street names?

K, Special K, Vitamin K, Black Hole, Bump, Jet, K-Hole, Kit Kat, Psychedelic Heroin, Purple, Super Acid, Green, and Cat Valium.

Is it detectable and how long does it stay in your system?

YES. A urine or a blood test can detect the broken down form of the drug 7-14 days after ingestion. Ketamine can be very difficult to detect in its true form because the body quickly breaks it down. Tests must be ordered by a health professional because it is not part of a normal “tox screen.”

Is there anything else I should know about Ketamine?

Ketamine can cause blood pressure, respiration, and pulse to increase. Seizure-like activity can also occur. Also, phobic reactions are likely to occur more often when this drug is used.

What do I do if I think I have been drugged at a party?

Get to a safe place and call someone you trust with your life. Have your trusted friend get you to a hospital emergency room immediately. Remember, when mixed with alcohol, Ketamine can be fatal for some people. Try to keep some of the beverage for testing if possible. Notify appropriate law enforcement (campus or community police). If you think you have been raped or sexually assaulted after ingesting a drug-laced beverage, call a rape crisis center. The NWA Rape Crisis center hotline is 1-800-794-4175 and the Benton County Rape Crisis Center hotline is 1-800-775-9011. If you decide to file a police report, do not shower, bathe, douche, change clothes, or brush your teeth until medical and legal evidence can be collected. Get to a hospital or clinic to receive treatment for any internal/external injuries (whether or not you see any – they may be undetectable to you), testing for pregnancy or STD’s, treatment for pregnancy or STD’s, and to receive support. Request a urine test to detect the presence of drugs as soon as possible.

Pictures from the DEA photo library (www.dea.gov/photo_library1.html). Information adapted from the The Office of National Drug Control Policy, Drug-Free Resource Net (www.drugfreeamerica.org), and The National Coalition Against Sexual Assault

STAR Central – Office of Support, Training, Advocacy, & Resources on Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence

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