

KETAMINE

Street Names

Green, K, Ket, Kit kat, Special K, Super K, Vitamin K, Super K, Tekno (on ket spelt backwards) Tekno smack.

Description

Ketamine can come as a white powder; a white tablet or coloured capsules and is also available in ampoules as a liquid.

Routes of Use

Sniffed, ingested or injected.

History

Ketamine was invented in 1962 as an anaesthetic for use in human and animal medicine. It causes muscle rigidity, so that a patient placed in a certain position cannot move until the anaesthetic has worn off. It was widely used in emergency surgery in field hospitals in the Vietnam War. It is still used in operations on children or pensioners, or to top up other anaesthetics during long operations. It is more widely used in countries like India where it is relatively cheap. By the early 1990s ketamine had found its way on to the dance scene in the UK.

Effects People Seek

The initial effects of ketamine in moderate doses are usually stimulation and feelings of energy and euphoria. The initial energy effects are often followed by experiences similar to sedative and hallucinatory drugs. Physical symptoms may include slurred speech, poor co-ordination, numbness, vomiting. Users commonly experience temporary paralysis.

Other Effects

Hallucinatory experiences often include floating sensations; loss of sense of time and feeling disconnected from the body. Users report feelings of being very alone and having an 'out of body' or near death experiences. High doses seem to deprive the brain of all senses. While some people have positive, almost spiritual experiences for others it can be very frightening. The fact that ketamine has anaesthetic properties poses the danger of the user less likely to feel pain. If a large amount is taken there is a risk of respiratory collapse or heart failure.

Dependence & Tolerance

Physical dependence and withdrawal are not a feature with ketamine use. Tolerance can develop with regular use so users need to take more to get a similar effect. Evidence is available to suggest that some users develop psychological dependence. This may have something to do with the anaesthetic effect that some users become accustomed to.

The Law

Ketamine is a Class C drug which means that it's illegal to possess it and to supply it. Possession can get you up to two years in prison and/or an unlimited fine. Supplying someone else, even your friends, can get you 14 years in jail and/or an unlimited fine.