

## Ketamine: Factsheet



### Evidence ratings:

This resource has undergone expert review. See our [Help/Q&A section](#) for more details.

**Year:** Year 9–10, Year 11–12

**Targeted Drugs:** **Ketamine**

**Tags:** **K, special K, Vitamin K, horse tranquilizer, Ket**

**Time Allocated:** Partial lesson (under 45mins)

**Origin:** Australian

**Cost:**

Free

### Attachments

[Ketamine: Detailed Resource \(for Parents/Teachers\)](#)

## What is Ketamine?

**Ketamine is also known as K, Ket, special K, Vitamin K, or horse tranquiliser.**

Ketamine (ketamine hydrochloride) is a white powder, usually sold in 'bumps' or grams. A 'bump' is a small amount of powder which is snorted through a small glass inhaler called a bumper. Ketamine can also be swallowed, smoked, or injected.

Ketamine is commonly used by veterinarians to sedate animals such as horses. As with all drugs sold in powder form, ketamine may also be sold 'cut' (mixed) with other white powder substances which may or may not be harmful- people using this drug can never be 100% sure of what they're getting.

### What are the effects of Ketamine?

If snorted or 'bumped', ketamine takes effect within 5-10 minutes (longer if swallowed). Its effects can last for a couple of hours.

The effects of ketamine vary, but may include:

#### Immediate

- Increased heart rate and body temperature
- Drowsiness
- Feeling of euphoria (a 'high')
- Loss of coordination
- Slurred speech
- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Confusion and disorientation
- Numbness and a feeling of paralysis
- Nausea and vomiting
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't really there)
- Paranoia (feeling extremely suspicious and frightened)
- Psychosis (see glossary)
- An experience known as the 'K-hole' which is the feeling of being trapped in a state of detachment. This can be frightening
- Overdose

#### Long-term

- Dependence (addiction)
- Problems with memory, attention, and decision making
- Mental health problems
- Ulcerative cystitis – symptoms include frequent and painful urination, cramps and involuntary urination.
- Intense abdominal pains known as 'K-cramps'
- Kidney problems

## Evidence Base

This factsheet was developed following expert review by researchers at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney, the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, and the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University.

**Download attachment** for more information and a list of sources.

Page last reviewed: 28 November 2019.