

# January Drug of the Month

## KETAMINE

**Street Names:** “Special K, K, Kit Kat, Cat Valium, Super Acid, Special La Coke, Purple, Jet (Texas), Vitamin K, Green”

**Related Terms:**

“K-Land”- refers to “mellow and colorful experience”

“K-Hole”- refers to “out-of-body, near death experience”

“Baby Food”- refers to an “infantile inertia” state of being

“God”- refers to when “users believe they met their maker”

“a Bump”- a dose taken (as in “they took a bump”)

**Chemical Name:** Ketamine hydrochloride, 2-(2-chlorophenyl)-2-(methylamino)-cyclohexanone hydrochloride

**Trade/Pharmacology Names:** “Ketalar, Ketaset, Ketaiet, Ketavet, Vetamine, Vetaket, and Ketamine Hydrochloride Injection”

**Description:** Ketamine was first developed to replace PCP, and comes in a white/off-white powder, pill, cream or clear liquid form and can be injected, snorted, smoked or added to beverages. Ketamine distorts perceptions, reality and reasoning abilities. The drug produces feelings of detachment from environment and self, which usually last 1-3 hours, depending on method and amount of use. Prolonged usage can cause delirium, amnesia, depression and long-term memory and cognitive difficulties.

**Licit Uses:** Ketamine is an anesthetic used for humans and animals. It is most commonly used as an animal tranquilizer, especially for horses. Because of its dissociative effects, it is also used as a battlefield anesthetic dating back to the Vietnam War. The World Health Organization (WHO) has added Ketamine to their “Essential Drug List” for basic health needs of a nation. The drug is a commonly found in emergency medicine.

**Illicit Uses:** In the US, Ketamine was sanctioned as Schedule III in August of 1999, which made it illegal to possess without a license or prescription. Although ninety percent of Ketamine is sold legally, the remaining ten percent sold is highly dangerous and targets teens and young adults. Ketamine is a noted “club drug” and is commonly found at raves and dance parties. Small doses will have a “mild, dreamy effect” and larger doses can result in the “k-hole” effect. Because it is odorless and tasteless, it can be added to beverages without being detected. This had led to Ketamine being used as a “date-rape drug” because the individual is unable to move.

**Recent News:**

- According to NIDA, a significant number of vet clinics are being robbed for their ketamine stock.
- DEA research suggests that a major source of US Ketamine is diverted from Mexican Pharmacies.
- A NIDA fact sheet stated that 1.2% 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 1.0% 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 1.5% of all 12<sup>th</sup> graders have abused Ketamine in the past year.

**Sources:**

- US Dept of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
- The Partnership at Drugfree.org