

Tell your nurse or doctor immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Severe headache
- Severe abdominal pain
- Painful urination or being unable to urinate, especially if there is blood in your urine.

For 24 hour professional advice and information, call:



What Is Intranasal Ketamine?

- Ketamine is a medication that has been used safely in hospitals for many years.
- At high doses, it is used for anesthesia and pain control.
- At much lower doses, ketamine can help treat depression and reduce suicidal thoughts.
- The dose used for depression is much lower than the dose used for surgery or recreational use.
- Ketamine is usually given along with your regular antidepressant and other mental treatments.

Why Am I Being Offered This Treatment?

You may be offered intranasal ketamine if:

- Your depression has not improved with other treatments
- You are having severe or overwhelming suicidal thoughts
- Your psychiatrist believes this treatment may help.

This treatment is given under close medical supervision.

How Does Ketamine Work?

- Depression can happen when communication between brain cells is not working properly.
- Most antidepressants work on serotonin or similar brain chemicals.
- Ketamine works in a different way.
- Ketamine affects a brain chemical called glutamate, which may help brain cells communicate better.
- Some people notice improvement more quickly with ketamine than with traditional antidepressants.
- Researchers are still learning exactly how ketamine works.

Is Ketamine Safe?

- When given under medical supervision, intranasal ketamine is considered safe for some patients.
- You will be carefully assessed before starting treatment and closely monitored during each session.
- If this treatment is no longer helping you, or if side effects become a concern, treatment will be stopped.



Some people notice temporary side effects during or after treatment. These can be:

- Feeling detached or dream-like
- Changes in vision or perception
- Drowsiness or sleepiness
- changes in thinking or concentration
- Temporary increase in blood pressure

These effects are usually temporary and monitored by staff.

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How Is Intranasal Ketamine Given?

- Ketamine is given as a nasal spray.
- The spray device turns liquid medicine into a fine mist that is breathed into the nose.

What Happens During Treatment?

1. Blow your nose before treatment.
2. Sit comfortably in a chair or lie in a hospital bed.
3. The spray device is placed gently inside your nostril.
4. The medication is sprayed into your nose.
5. Wait 5 minutes between sprays.
6. Alternate nostrils with each spray.

After the full dose, you will rest for **at least 90 minutes** while a nurse monitors you.

How Often Will I Receive Treatment?

- Most patients receive 3 to 4 treatments.
- Treatments usually take place over 7 to 10 days.
- Your doctor and nurse will closely monitor how you respond.
- Treatment may stop early if symptoms improve or side effects occur.

When Will I Notice Improvement?

- Some people notice improvement within 1 to 4 hours.
- Maximum benefit is often felt within 24 hours.
- Benefits may last 1 to 3 weeks and sometimes longer.

Ketamine is not a cure for depression. Ongoing treatment and follow-up are still important

After Treatment

- You may feel tired for the rest of the day.
- Avoid driving until the next day, after a full night of sleep.
- Continue with your regular medications unless you are told otherwise.

If you have questions, speak with your nurse, pharmacist, or psychiatrist.

If you have concerns at any time, support is available.



Scan the QR code for a digital copy of the UofS College of Pharmacy and Nutrition's Ketamine information booklet:



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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is ketamine legal?

- Yes. Ketamine is a legally approved medication used under medical supervision. Using ketamine for depression is called *off-label*. This means it was first approved for other uses, but research shows it can be safe and helpful when given by trained -care providers.

Q: Is ketamine addictive?

- Dependence may occur with prolonged or unsupervised use, usually at higher doses than those used for depression, which is why treatment is short and monitored.

Q: Will ketamine replace my antidepressant?

- Usually no. It is often used alongside other medication.

Resources & Support

Questions About Your Treatment?

If you have questions about your intranasal ketamine treatment, speak with:

- Your nurse
- Your pharmacist
- Your psychiatrist

Important Reminder

Intranasal ketamine **is part of a broader mental treatment plan.**

Continue to:

- Attend follow-up appointments
- Take medications as prescribed
- Engage in therapy or counselling if recommended

Recovery is a process, and support is available.