

How long will I have to take ketamine?

You should take ketamine for as long as you need it for pain relief. Your doctor will review your treatment at regular intervals.

How do I get my ketamine?

A palliative medicine specialist will normally be involved when ketamine is initially prescribed for you. Your first supply will be dispensed by the hospital/hospice pharmacy. You will be given at least 7 days supply to take home. Your palliative medicine specialist will advise where to obtain more ketamine. In some cases supply may be arranged through your hospital pharmacy.

If your GP is to continue your supply contact them to arrange a prescription as soon as possible. Then take it to your local community pharmacy. Do not let your supply run out before you order your next prescription. Ketamine will normally need to be ordered by your pharmacy and this may take up to one week.

How do I store my ketamine?

Store this medication in a dry place out of reach of children. Keep it at or below 25°C (usual room temperature).

When you first open a bottle of ketamine liquid mark the date on the bottle. It can be used for 28 days after opening. Unopened bottles expire after the date printed on the label.

Each ketamine injection should be used only once and any remaining solution discarded safely by your nurse.

Return any expired or unused ketamine to your community pharmacy so they can dispose of it safely.

General information

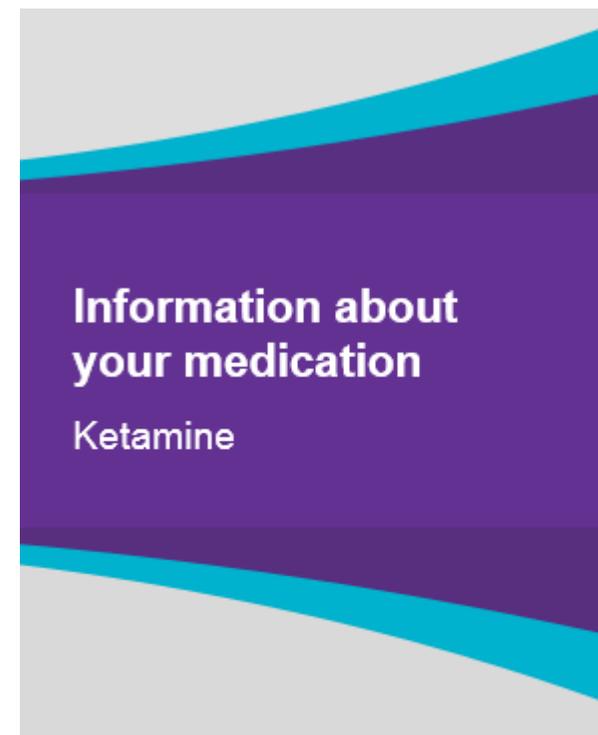
This medicine is only for you. Only a doctor can prescribe it for you. Never give it to anybody else, even if their symptoms appear to be the same as yours. It may harm them.

Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you need more information or advice.

Read this leaflet with any manufacturer's information you have been given.

Keep this leaflet. You may need it again.

Developed by the NI Macmillan Palliative Care Pharmacy Service Improvement Team in conjunction with the Regional Palliative Medicine Group (RPMG) January 2019. For review January 2022



Palliative Care Patient Information Leaflet

Why am I taking ketamine?

Your doctor has prescribed ketamine as a painkiller. It is used to relieve some types of pain, especially nerve pain. It will not work for all types of pain.

How do I take it?

You should take ketamine as your doctor has prescribed. Your dose will be written on the label of the medicine. The dose may be changed according to how well it treats your pain.

Ketamine can be prescribed as a liquid or as an injection.

Ketamine liquid

Take by mouth, using a medicine spoon or oral syringe to measure the dose before swallowing the liquid.

Ketamine injection

It is usually given as an injection under the skin using a syringe pump. This delivers it continuously (infusion) over 24 hours. Your nurse will reload the syringe pump daily.

What if I don't take it properly?

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember then continue as before. Do not take two regular doses within four

hours of each other. You can change the times of use to allow at least four hours between doses if you need to.

Contact your doctor immediately if you accidentally take more ketamine than prescribed.

What are the side effects?

Like all medicines ketamine may cause side effects, although not everybody gets them and many reduce over time.

It may cause dizziness, sleepiness or difficulty concentrating. If you are affected do not drive or operate machinery.

Occasionally ketamine can cause strange or unpleasant moods, vivid dreams or hallucinations. You may find you produce more saliva. Changes in blood pressure have been reported. Your doctor will check your blood pressure regularly, especially when ketamine is first prescribed or the dose changed. Ketamine may rarely affect the liver. Your doctor may take blood tests when your dose is changed, or at regular intervals.

Ketamine can cause inflammation of the bladder though it is rare. The signs are bladder pain, pain on passing urine or blood in your urine. You should contact

your doctor immediately if you develop any of these.

It is possible to have other unwanted effects not mentioned in this leaflet. If you have any concerns contact your doctor, pharmacist or specialist nurse.

Will ketamine affect other medicines I take?

It is important that your doctor knows what other medicines you are taking.

This includes any medicines bought at a pharmacy or shop or any herbal remedies or recreational drugs.

If you are taking other medicines that can cause dizziness or make you sleepy then this can be worsened by taking ketamine.

Can I drink alcohol?

Avoid alcohol while taking ketamine. Alcohol can increase some of the side effects of ketamine such as dizziness and drowsiness.

Can I drive?

Ketamine may make you feel drowsy, especially when you first start it or if your dose is increased. Do not drive if you feel drowsy.