

Ketamine

AKA: K, Ket, Super K, Vitamin K
Analogues include methoxetamine

Popularity 3.2% of 16-24 year olds report use in last year (CSEW 2019/20 marginally up on previous year)

Method of Use: snorted, injected (usually IM), swallowed

Mechanism: acts as an antagonist at glutamate receptors – reducing electrical signals & thus affecting movement, pain, memory, perception.
Increases dopamine & has anti-depressant qualities at present not fully understood

Duration: 2-3hrs

Effects: +ve: hallucinatory, altered thinking, mild euphoria, calm detachment, depersonalisation, non-corporeal state
-ve: nausea, paralysis, scary hallucinations, loss of muscular control



Law: Class B, Schedule 2 (Class A if prepared for injection)

Profile: dissociative anaesthetic, hallucinogen

Purity: variable; could be ketamine analogue or adulterated

Cost: £20/gm

Source: imported from Asia, European manufacture, vets

Indicators: partially paralysed, stumbling gait, not speaking or moving much, dilated pupils

Risks: nausea, MH problems, hurting self & vulnerability when intoxicated. Dependency, bladder problems, stomach cramps, loss of consciousness

Although referred to as an “animal tranquilliser” ketamine is an anaesthetic used in human and veterinary medicine. Ketamine was a non-CD & diverted from vets or purchased from overseas. It was made a Class C drug & then rescheduled to Class B. However use has persisted & increased. Much ketamine use is recreational and in combination with other drugs such as MDMA or cocaine. It is also being explored for use in treatment of PTSD and depression and is privately prescribed for such uses.