

# Patient Consent for Ketamine Therapy

Wander Medicine

Updated: June 1, 2022

## Background

Ketamine is a medication that inhibits a receptor in the brain and spinal cord called NMDA (N-Methyl-D Aspartate). At higher doses, ketamine can be used as an anesthetic medication, used to put people to sleep for surgery. However, at lower doses, it can be used for the treatment of both chronic and acute pain as well as depression. At lower doses, most people do not go to sleep or experience immediate memory impairment on ketamine. It is on the World Health Organization's list of Essential Medications and is included as one of the most effective and safe medications needed to provide health care.

## Benefits of Treatment

Ketamine works differently than most other pain and depression medications. As a result of this, it often provides relief from both pain and depression, even after other medications have failed. If you are suffering from chronic pain or depression and have failed or had suboptimal results on other treatments, ketamine is a therapy that may be beneficial to you.

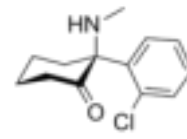
## Risks of Treatment

Ketamine has the potential to be an addictive medication, it can lead to dependence, and can be habit forming. Addiction is the greatest risk of starting therapy with this medication and every patient starting ketamine must understand this. Ketamine therapy is also very expensive. It requires multiple treatments each costing hundreds of dollars in order to be effective, which can lead to serious financial hardship. Frequent use (>20 times a month,  $\geq 1\text{mg/kg}$  per dose) of ketamine has been shown to cause memory impairment and depression in individuals with addiction. It can also cause bladder and urinary problems. At lower doses and frequency, such issues have not been reported. Wander Medicine will not give a patient ketamine more than 10 times in a given 30 day period and will not go above  $0.8\text{ mg/kg/hour}$  when dosing ketamine.

## Side Effects of Ketamine

The most common side effect of low dose ketamine is a mild euphoric sensation. Many patients describe feeling like they are "in the clouds." This can be alarming to some individuals, but this feeling is not dangerous. Many other side effects are possible. These side effects are listed below. Since Wander Medicine uses low doses of ketamine, all of the below side effects are very rare.

- Hallucinations
- Delirium or confusion
- Bizarre thinking



- Dissociation between body and mind
- Vital sign abnormalities (fast or slow heart rate and high blood pressure)
- Increased salivation
- Nausea and vomiting
- Unusual movements
- Bladder pain
- Airway spasm
- Increased pressure in the brain

If a side effect or adverse reaction is suspected, the patient agrees to follow up appropriately with their primary care provider.

### **Who Should Not Take Ketamine**

- Anyone who has had an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis to ketamine.
- Those who have serious substance abuse issues and/or are very prone to addiction.
- Those with blood pressures > 160 systolic or > 90 diastolic at rest (please treat hypertension prior to seeking ketamine).
- Individuals with brain lesions or with a history of strokes should be cautious about receiving ketamine.
- Those who have consumed alcohol, or other mind altering substances the day of therapy. Wander Medicine staff reserves the right to refuse treatment if a patient appears altered or intoxicated in any way.
- Anyone who is currently receiving ketamine therapy at another establishment.

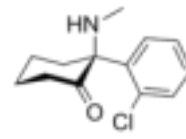
### **Alternative Treatments**

Many other treatments exist that should be utilized first prior to ketamine therapy in order to treat depression and pain. Exercise and a healthy lifestyle should always be the first line treatment for both conditions. Those with depression should seek counseling and therapy with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and other first line medications prior to seeking ketamine therapy. Those with chronic pain should try physical therapy and other medications such as acetaminophen prior to starting ketamine.

### **Safety After Ketamine Therapy**

As ketamine affects both mental and physical performance. As a patient receiving ketamine therapy at Wander Medicine you agree to the following:

- The patient will not drive a vehicle, operate heavy equipment, or perform jobs or tasks which could affect the safety of one's self or others until the day after receiving ketamine therapy. Driving immediately after therapy will not be tolerated. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from future ketamine treatments at Wander Medicine.
- The patient agrees that Wander Medicine is not liable for any actions or behaviors by the patient after discharging the clinic. Do not make any life changing decisions the day of receiving ketamine therapy.
- Each ketamine prescription is valid for 1 year from the patient's initial "Ketamine Consultation" with Dr. Brandenburg. An annual "Ketamine Consultation" with Dr. Brandenburg is required in order to renew the patient's ketamine prescription in order to continue receiving



ketamine therapy at Wander Medicine.

### Consent to Treat

By signing and dating below, the patient gives Wander Medicine consent to treat them with ketamine therapy. The patient understands that ketamine has risks, which can be serious and include addiction. The patient understands the benefits of ketamine as well as alternatives. The patient has read and understands everything written on this document. The patient agrees with and has signed the Wander Medicine "[Consent for Patient Care](#)" policy. The patient has been completely honest with Wander Medicine providers regarding their medical history, past illicit drug use, and any problems with addiction. The patient understands that they must be actively participating in therapy with a licensed mental health provider, as well as be referred by this provider, in order to receive this treatment. Terminating their therapy will result in the patient being ineligible for ketamine treatment at Wander Medicine. The patient would like to proceed with ketamine therapy, and the patient accepts all risks and benefits of treatment.

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Wander Medicine Provider Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_