



WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE USE KETAMINE?



Mental Health

Many people take ketamine as a way to self-medicate. Its dissociative effects can provide a sense of relief from anxiety, depression or trauma.

Peer Pressure

Ketamine can be popular or normalised in certain social settings, so taking it can express a desire to “fit in”.

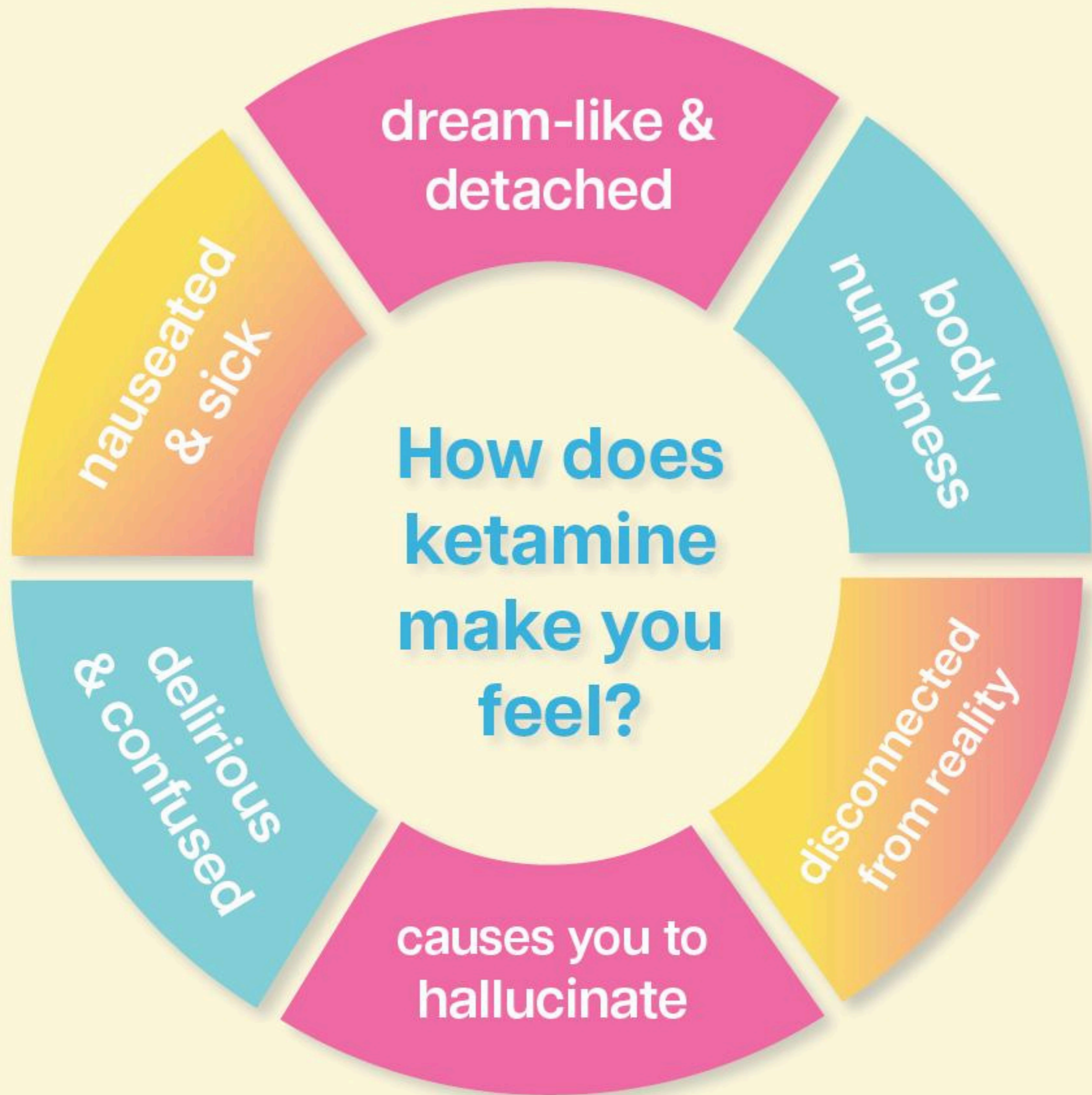
Affordability

Compared with other drugs, ketamine is relatively cheap and affordable. This affordability makes it more accessible to young people.

Coping Mechanism

For many young people, daily life is full of stresses and challenges. Taking ketamine can be a way to deal with life, feel good, and simply get through the day.





**What to
know about**

Ketamine



1.

Ketamine is a powerful drug which is used in the medical field as a general anaesthetic during controlled practices.



2.

As an anaesthetic, it sedates and reduces sensations in the body, causing feelings of detachment and disconnection.



3.

Almost since ketamine's introduction into the UK, it has been used illegally and unsafely as a recreational drug. Statistics show these numbers continue to rise annually.



4.

Street ketamine appears similar to cocaine - it looks like a grainy white powder, and is commonly snorted through the nostrils.



5.

Despite its popularity, data continues to show the drastic and life-affecting harm that ketamine use has upon both physical and mental health.



To recap:

- Ketamine is an anaesthetic used in medicine
- Ketamine reduces sensations in the body, creating detachment
- Ketamine is being used illegally as a recreational drug, having serious impacts on mental and physical health

Ketamine & physical health

'Ketamine Bladder Syndrome':
destroys the lining of the bladder

'K-cramps': frequent abdominal
pain, nausea and vomiting

Regular use can lead to irreversible liver
and kidney damage





Causes damage to the brain and impacts development

When mixed or taken with other drugs and substances, the result can be fatal

Causes damage to your short and long term memory

High doses affect your respiratory system, stopping you from breathing which can cause death

Ketamine & mental health



Chronic use can cause depression, anxiety and mood swings

Can make existing mental health problems more severe

Psychotic symptoms like hallucinations and confusion

Users can develop an addiction or dependence



Flashbacks and
problems with
concentration

Reduced emotional
responsiveness

Agitation, panic
attacks

Damage to short and
long-term memory

Emotional numbness
or flat affect



What to know about ketamine &

Psychological addiction



1.

A psychological addiction or dependence is a compulsive need to use a substance or to engage in an activity, despite knowing it's harmful.



2.

It's driven by emotional or mental cravings rather than the body, and has no physical withdrawal symptoms.



3.

Drugs affect the brain's reward system, releasing dopamine (pleasure hormones) when taken. This reinforces behaviour which gives pleasure, even if it's unhealthy.



4.

With frequent use, the brain adapts and becomes tolerant. Therefore more Ketamine is needed to get the same effect.



5.

This is where a dependence or addiction develops, meaning it's difficult to quit. Ketamine will feel like the only source of pleasure in someone's life.



6.

As Ketamine creates a feeling of detachment, users can neglect other areas of their life. Ketamine then becomes the only thing that helps them cope or get through the day.



To recap:

- A psychological addiction is driven by emotional or mental cravings rather than the body
- It's being unable to stop using ketamine as the brain has been re-wired to think it's the only pleasurable thing in life
- It's an overpowering compulsion to take ketamine

