



Ketamine Infusion Therapy Patient Guide

1. Introduction

Welcome. If you are reading this, you or someone you care about may be considering - or already preparing for - ketamine infusion therapy as a potential treatment for depression that has not responded to standard treatments. This guide is intended to help you understand what ketamine therapy involves, what to expect, how to prepare, and how to care for yourself afterward.

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2. What Is Ketamine Therapy - and Why It Matters

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Ketamine is a medication that, when used in low, controlled doses under medical supervision, has been shown to bring rapid improvement in depressive symptoms - often much faster than traditional antidepressants. For people with depression that remains unresolved after multiple antidepressant trials, or who struggle with suicidal thoughts, ketamine therapy can offer a new path forward.

However, ketamine is not a cure. Its antidepressant effects tend to be temporary, often lasting days to a week. Ketamine therapy is usually administered in a series of infusions and ideally combined with ongoing mental health support like therapy and lifestyle changes.

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3. What to Expect During Your Infusion

What to Expect During Your Infusion

Here's a typical flow of what a ketamine infusion session looks like:

- Check-in & vital signs: blood pressure, heart rate, etc.
- IV placement in your arm or hand
- Infusion period (about 40-60 minutes): You may feel dissociated or 'floaty'
- Observation afterward (20-30 minutes): You're monitored before discharge

Common side effects include dissociation, dizziness, nausea, and increased heart rate. Most are short-lived and manageable.

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4. Pre-Treatment Preparation Checklist

Pre-Treatment Preparation Checklist

- Discuss suitability with your healthcare provider
- Complete any lab tests requested
- Arrange transportation (you cannot drive yourself home)
- Get a good night's sleep
- Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs
- Eat a light meal if permitted
- Mentally prepare with calming activities

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5. Post-Treatment Care Instructions

Post-Treatment Care Instructions

- Rest for the remainder of the day
- Avoid driving or major decisions
- Stay hydrated and eat lightly
- Refrain from alcohol and recreational drugs for 24 hours
- Monitor your mood and physical state
- Attend all follow-up appointments

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6. Frequently Asked Questions

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Q: How quickly will I feel better?

A: Some feel better within hours; peak benefits may come within 24 hours.

Q: How long do effects last?

A: Usually days to a week; maintenance may be needed.

Q: Is it a cure?

A: No. It offers relief but not a permanent solution.

Q: What if I don't feel better after one infusion?

A: A series of infusions is often needed.

Q: Can it help with suicidal thoughts?

A: Yes, ketamine has shown rapid reduction in suicidal ideation in many cases.

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7. Integration Tips for Lasting Results

Integration Tips for Lasting Results

- Pair therapy with ketamine to process thoughts and emotions
- Journal your reflections
- Practice self-care and mindfulness
- Maintain realistic expectations
- Build a support system and healthy habits
- Stay in close contact with your care provider

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8. Notes & Reflections

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Use this space to journal your experiences after each session:

- What did you feel during and after the infusion?
- Any thoughts, visions, or emotions that stood out?
- How is your mood over the following days?
- What insights would you like to discuss in therapy?

Session 1:

Session 2:

Session 3:
