



# Ketamine Infusion

## WHY HAVE THIS PROCEDURE?

Ketamine is a strong pain medication and anaesthetic. It is used extensively by anaesthetists, pain specialists and paramedics in many settings. Your pain specialist will have explained your individual need for a Ketamine administration.

Ketamine has proven to be beneficial in reducing pain to:

- Provide long lasting pain relief
- Reduce the dose of other pain medications
- Allow for improved assessment

## THE PROCEDURE

- This will be carried out in hospital for a duration specified by your pain specialist. This may require a stay of up to one week.
- Sometimes ketamine may be administered over a few hours only.
- Ketamine is usually administered into a vein through an intravenous drip or cannulae (infusion).
- Sometimes it may be using a small needle under the skin (subcutaneous infusion).
- A special drip may be sited called a "PICC line." A PICC line is designed to last longer than normal drips and are inserted under sterile conditions (such as in theatre) with an x-ray machine.
- Ketamine is administered as a continuous medication infusion.
- The infusion is started at a low rate to allow time for the body to adjust to the medication and then is increased slowly thereafter.
- You will stay on your normal medications whilst the Ketamine infusion is administered (unless otherwise outlined by your Pain Specialist).
- You will be reviewed regularly by one of the Victoria Pain Specialists, who will monitor your progress and adjust your medication in consultation with you.

## AFTER THE PROCEDURE

You will generally remain on your normal dose of pain medication until the ketamine begins to have an effect. Once you do notice an effect, the pain medication will be altered.

Significant side effects are uncommon at the doses used for this procedure.

## COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- Dizziness, unsteadiness, blurred vision.
- Headache, nausea.
- Sometimes pins and needles.
- Drowsiness.

### *With Higher doses*

- Hallucinations.
- Vivid/Bad dreams.
- Sedation

## PRECAUTIONS

It is important to tell us if you are taking any other drugs, including prescription, nonprescription or recreational drugs. Self-medication with opioid medication or marijuana is not permitted and will result in the ketamine infusion being terminated because of safety concerns.

Ketamine may make you drowsy. You should not enter into any legally binding agreements or make any life changing decisions whilst receiving this medication.

In some cases, ketamine may not benefit you or you may be too sensitive to the medication to tolerate the side effects. The infusion can be stopped at any time.