Ketamine for Pain Relief: What you need to know

What is Ketamine
Ketamine is a medication that is used to sedate patients during invasive procedures. When given in low doses, Ketamine can improve pain control in the hospital setting. It can be particularly helpful for patients whose pain is not adequately controlled with commonly used pain medications.

Who might benefit from low dose Ketamine?
- Patients with chronic pain that is not well-controlled with usual medication
- Patients with chronic pain who are scheduled for surgeries that are expected to be painful.
- Patients the Adult or Pediatric Pain Services feel may benefit from Ketamine therapy

Who should not use Ketamine?
Patients with certain medical conditions may not be able to take Ketamine to manage their pain. These conditions include:
- Fast heart rate
- High blood pressure
- History of a closed head injury or a seizure disorder

What are the side effects of Ketamine?
Some of the side effects associated with Ketamine include:
- High or low heart rate or blood pressure
- Involuntary eye or muscle movements
• Nausea, vomiting or increased oral secretions
• Confusion, restlessness and/or strange dreamlike experiences

Usually, side effects are managed by either giving a medication to treat the side effect, or decreasing or stopping the Ketamine.

**What is a realistic expectation of my pain control?**

The goal of pain management is for you to be comfortable enough to sleep, move, breathe, and do personal care. For patients living with chronic pain, the aim of therapy is to allow participation in activities that are necessary for work and home life. **It may not always be possible to achieve complete relief of pain.**

**How will I receive the Ketamine**

You will receive Ketamine as a continuous infusion from an intravenous (IV) pump into your IV site. Occasionally, Ketamine may be given orally as well. You may also receive other pain medications to help manage your pain at the same time.

**Who will be in charge of my pain management while I take Ketamine**

The Acute Pain Service will be in charge of your pain management while you are taking Ketamine in the hospital. A member of the pain service will see you periodically throughout the day to evaluate your pain control and make adjustments as needed.

**Who can answer questions about Ketamine**

Please contact the Acute Pain Service with any questions or concerns about taking Ketamine while in the hospital.
To reach the **Adult Pain Service** dial 734.936.4000 and ask the operator to page 9031.

To reach the **Pediatric Acute Pain** Service dial 734.936.4000 and ask the operator to page 2522 (24 hrs/7days/week).

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