

Ketamine Bladder Syndrome

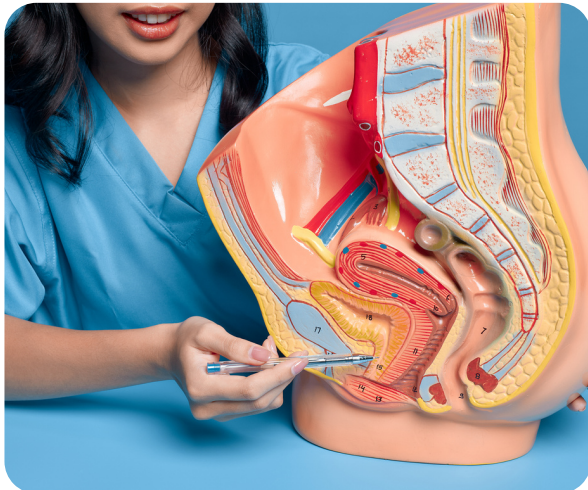
What is Ketamine Bladder Syndrome?

Ketamine Bladder Syndrome is a bladder condition caused by the use of Ketamine. Other names for this condition are:

- Ketamine-associated cystitis
- Ketamine-associated urinary tract pathology
- Ketamine uropathy
- K Bladder

Ketamine therapy is commonly used medically for these types of pain:

- Neuropathic pain (Nerve pain)
- Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)
- End of life symptoms
- Surgery



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Ketamine Bladder



Common Symptoms of Ketamine Bladder

Haematuria (Blood in Your Urine)

- **Haematuria** tends to subside after 1 to 2 weeks.
- **Spasms** tend to subside after 1 to 2 weeks.
- **Pain** can last up to 6 months but can be managed.

General Advice During Treatment

- **Increase fluid intake** to stay hydrated.
- **Limit acidic fluids** such as orange or citrus juice.
- **Avoid caffeine and alcohol** as they can irritate the bladder.

Addressing Ketamine Bladder

- People may be afraid to speak to their doctors about the symptoms of Ketamine bladder, but it's important to remember that healthcare services and substance use services are there to help you.
- If you're worried about Ketamine bladder, speak to your **GP, Doctor** or **Substance Use Service**.
- Remember, it is possible to **reverse the symptoms** if you **act early**.

Common Myths

There are myths that if you drink less fluids, you won't need to urinate. However, this is not the case. Drinking less causes urine to become more concentrated, which irritates the bladder more than if you were hydrated

Ketamine Health Factors and Treatment

Long-Term Use of Ketamine

- Can affect brain function
- Ulcerative cystitis (an invisible, lifelong chronic condition that affects the lining of the bladder)
- Frequent urination is common
- Blood in urine and pain during urination
- K-pains/ Ketamine cramps
- Ketamine Bladder Syndrome: If left untreated, Ketamine bladder can have serious consequences. The inflamed bladder tissue can eventually become scarred (fibrosis). Once scarred, a damaged bladder cannot be fully treated without major surgery.

Effects on the Bladder

- **Nerve pain:** Chronic use causes nerve pain, leading to shooting, tingling, or burning sensations.
- **Bladder damage:** Ketamine damages the bladder lining and muscle, causing it to reduce in size and experience spasms.
- **Bladder lining shedding:** In some cases, the bladder lining sheds, causing severe pain when passing down the urethra. This is often described as blood-tinged jelly, and patients commonly report that the pain subsides after this has passed.

Pain Relief

Due to Ketamine therapy being used for neuropathic pain, normal pain relief such as paracetamol or anti-inflammatory medication may not be effective.

• First-line medication

Start with Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) and paracetamol. Sometimes, other medications alone or in combination can be used to help alleviate pain.

• Amitriptyline

Start with a low dose and titrate to an effective dose. If there is no change, a referral to a chronic pain team is needed.

• Combination Therapy

Amitriptyline combined with an antispasmodic medication (a medication that relieves, prevents, or lowers the incidence of muscle spasms) is recommended for pain and spasms.

These medications can be taken while actively using Ketamine and while reducing to abstinence, as prescribed by a clinician.

