

Why Ketamine Infusion Therapy is Better Than Effexor for Treating Pain



If you've been in pain for a while and are searching for a new way to be pain-free, there is a new treatment solution you may be interested in. If you have been looking for alternative treatment options for your back, neck, shoulder, or other type of pain, there is a new kid on the block so to speak. Many pain management centers across the U.S. are now offering their patients new hope in the form of ketamine therapy.

Ketamine was developed in the 1960s and approved for use during anesthesia but in more recent years it's been studied for use in psychiatry and as a pain med. Low doses, in the form of an IV infusion, have been successfully used as a rapid-acting treatment for chronic pain and also as a new option for treatment-resistant depression.

Ketamine Infusion Therapy vs Venlafaxine (Effexor)

Patients suffering with long term, chronic pain are shown to have up to 5 times increased risk for depression compared to their pain-free peers. This is why antidepressants are often prescribed to people with chronic back, spine, neck, shoulder and other types of pain.ⁱ

Venlafaxine (sold under the brand name Effexor) belongs to a group of antidepressant drugs called selective serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SSNRIs). Effexor is often

prescribed by doctors as an antidepressant treatment and also as a nerve pain medication. It is often prescribed to treat a variety of conditions including clinical depression, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome and more.

Antidepressants are also used to treat many chronic pain conditions including:

- Arthritis
- Diabetic neuropathy – aka nerve damage from diabetes
- Postherpetic neuralgia – AKA nerve damage from shingles
- Nerve pain from other causes such as spinal cord injury
- Lower back pain

Research studies indicate that patients with long term pain have a substantially increased risk for developing depression or major depressive disorder, anywhere from 2 to 5 times that of the general population. According to a Mayo Clinic article, “The painkilling mechanism of these drugs still isn't fully understood. Antidepressants may increase neurotransmitters in the spinal cord that reduce pain signals. But they don't work immediately.”ⁱⁱ

However, Effexor, and other SSNRIs, are associated with many unwanted side effects including weight gain, dry mouth, decreased sex drive, erectile dysfunction, nausea and drowsiness. If you've been dealing with spine pain, back pain, or other types of treatment-resistant chronic pain there is new hope in the form of ketamine infusion therapy.



History of This Wonder Drug

Ketamine, like many opioid analgesics used to treat pain, is a drug of abuse and is sometimes used recreationally as a non-prescription street drug to exploit its hallucinogenic and psychedelic properties. Used as a party drug since the 1980s and 1990s, ketamine has long been known as a club drug, however; when taken recreationally there is no knowing how pure, or adulterated, the drug is or how strong or weak it is. The danger for possible overdose is very real when using non-prescription street drugs.

Higher doses of ketamine result in various side-effects but when administered in low doses, such as during an infusion therapy session, these effects are limited. Also, when used in a clinical setting the drug is given at a slow rate and you are continually monitored by healthcare professionals to make sure you don't have an adverse reaction.

"Ketamine was developed in the 1960s as a surgical anesthetic for people and animals. The drug can cause hallucinations and a feeling of "dissociation" or unreality, and in the 1980s it took off as a party drug among people seeking those effects. It remained a common anesthetic, though, and in the early 2000s doctors began to notice a connection between ketamine and relief from symptoms of depression and other mood disorders.," said health reporter Erin Allday.ⁱⁱⁱ

Unlike conventional prescription medications, ketamine does not require long term continual use. A typical treatment plan includes several ketamine sessions spread out over a few weeks to several months. Even if someone is under a doctor's supervision for pain management, prescription drugs don't always work or only alleviate some of the symptoms. Medical providers at a pain management center can help create a comprehensive pain treatment plan for you that includes minimally invasive options such as ketamine infusion therapy.

Pain Centers Offering Ketamine Therapy

If you are suffering from any type of chronic pain, depression, anxiety or PTSD and haven't had good results with traditional treatment methods, reach out to your healthcare provider to discuss the possibility of scheduling an appointment for IV ketamine infusion. It just may be the perfect solution, offering you a more effective treatment regime.

If you are looking for a ketamine clinic near you, MidSouth Pain Treatment Center has several locations in the United States ready to identify the source of your pain, reduce your pain and improve function. They will conduct a complete medical history using cutting-edge technology to help determine potential causes of your chronic back pain including degenerative disc disease and arthritis of the spine.

Contact your local pain management center to schedule an appointment and meet with a healthcare provider, who will craft a specific treatment plan for your unique chronic pain symptoms. Reach out today and get back to an overall better quality of life!

Social Media Post (198 characters, 30 words)

Ketamine infusion therapy offers help if you're suffering from chronic back, shoulder or neck pain. Schedule an appointment for ketamine therapy today and discover a new treatment option to Effexor.

ⁱ Sansone, Randy A. and Sansone, Lori A . National Institutes of Health. Pain, Pain, Go Away: Antidepressants and Pain Management. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2729622/>

ⁱⁱ Mayo Clinic Staff. Antidepressants: Another weapon against chronic pain. Retrieved on 3/18/19 from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/pain-medications/art-20045647>

ⁱⁱⁱ Allday, Erin. San Francisco Chronicle. Long known as a party drug, ketamine now used for depression. Retrieved from: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Long-known-as-a-party-drug-ketamine-now-an-13692717.php>