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<u>Ketamine</u>, once used primarily for anesthesia purposes, has emerged as a potential game-changer in the treatment of major depression, PTSD, and suicidal ideation. The dissociative anesthetic drug, when administered in subanesthetic doses, disconnects individuals from troubling thoughts, memories, surroundings, actions, and identity. This unique effect has shown promising results in addressing a wide range of mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, PTSD, and chronic pain.

According to leading experts in the field, <u>ketamine</u> operates through multiple mechanisms to provide relief and support healing. By dissociating old neuronal connections, it paves the way for the formation of new, healthier connections. Additionally, ketamine boosts dopamine production while reducing brain swelling and inflammation.

The anti-reward center in the brain, known as the lateral habenula, plays a pivotal role in the efficacy of ketamine therapy. Trauma or ongoing disappointments can cause the lateral habenula to enter "burst mode," which results in depleted dopamine production and a profound sense of tiredness and lack of motivation. Ketamine effectively blocks this burst mode, rapidly restoring dopamine production and bringing relief and positive emotions to individuals.

While higher doses of ketamine have been known to cause hallucinations, particularly in patients with PTSD, the treatment remains safe and well-tolerated by the majority of patients. Common side effects include drowsiness, double vision, confusion, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and feelings of unease.

<u>Ketamine therapy</u> is gaining recognition as a potential breakthrough in the treatment of mental health conditions and chronic pain. By targeting multiple mechanisms in the brain, this innovative approach offers renewed hope to individuals grappling with these challenges.



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