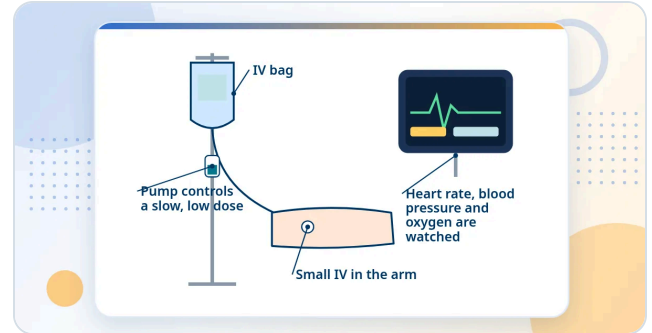


Ketamine infusion therapy

Ketamine is a medicine that has long been used for anesthesia. At lower doses, given slowly through an IV, it may help reduce some types of long-lasting pain. It acts on pain pathways in the nervous system in a different way than many pain medicines. Results vary, relief is often temporary, and it is not right for everyone. Careful screening comes first.

At GSMC: all GSMC providers evaluate patients and help decide which options may fit, at any of our 7 offices. Results vary.



What it is

Ketamine is thought to work partly by blocking NMDA receptors, which play a role in how the nervous system can become more sensitive to pain over time.

Ketamine is FDA-approved as an anesthetic. Its use for chronic pain is "off-label," which means doctors may use it for pain based on research and experience, but it is not FDA-approved for that purpose. The research is still growing, and the right dose and schedule are not yet settled.

Who it may help

- Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)
- Fibromyalgia
- Chronic nerve pain or other chronic pain that has not responded to other treatments, such as medicines, therapy, injections or neuromodulation

What to expect

1. **Screening visit:** we review your medical history, heart health, blood pressure, mental health history, medicines and any substance use. Some people may need lab work or a heart test.
2. **Arrival:** you arrive with an adult who will drive you home. Follow the eating and drinking instructions you are given.
3. **IV and monitoring:** a small IV is placed in your arm. Your blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen level are monitored the whole time in a monitored setting.
4. **Recovery:** you rest until the effects wear off and your vital signs are stable.
5. **A series of sessions:** treatment is usually given as a series, for example several sessions over one to two weeks. Some people later have occasional "booster" sessions if the first series helped.

Recovery

- **Dissociation:** feeling dreamy, floating or "outside your body," or changes in vision or sound.
- **Nausea** or vomiting. Medicine may be given to help.
- **Blood pressure and heart rate changes,** usually a rise. This is why you are monitored.
- Dizziness, tiredness, headache or blurred vision.

A driver is required. You must not drive, operate machinery or make major decisions for the rest of the day. Plan to rest at home. Relief, if it happens, may last days to weeks and varies from person to person.

Risks

Repeated or frequent use can, rarely, affect the bladder or liver, which is one reason sessions are spaced and monitored. Ketamine can be misused, so it is only given in our monitored setting. Pain may not improve.

Other options

Other options may include medicines for nerve pain, physical and occupational therapy, pain psychology, sympathetic nerve blocks (for CRPS), spinal cord or dorsal root ganglion stimulation and other interventional treatments.

Questions people ask

Is ketamine FDA-approved for chronic pain? No.

Ketamine is FDA-approved as an anesthetic. Using it for chronic pain is off-label, based on research that is still growing.

How many sessions will I need? Treatment is usually given as a series of sessions. Your physician will suggest a plan based on your condition and response.

Can I drive myself home? No. You must have an adult drive you home, and you should not drive for the rest of the day.

Insurance and cost

GSMC participates with all Aetna plans, including Aetna HMO, and many other plans. Coverage depends on your plan and may need prior authorization. Our team checks your benefits before treatment.

When to call us: fever or chills; redness, swelling or drainage where a needle or device was placed; new or worse pain, numbness or weakness. **Call 911** for chest pain, trouble breathing, or sudden loss of bladder or bowel control.

Call 732-202-3000

One number for all 7 GSMC offices:

Toms River · 1314 Hooper Ave, 1st Floor

Brick · 1608 NJ-88, Suite 102

Whiting · 1100 NJ-70, Entrance B

Barnegat · 249 S Main St, Suite 5

Manahawkin · 1109 Beacon Ave

Freehold · 322 Professional View Dr, 300 Bldg, 2nd Fl

West Long Branch · 100 NJ-36, Suite 1K

gsmedicalcenter.org/treatments/ketamine-infusion-therapy/



General information, not medical advice. Individual results vary, and no outcome can be promised. Illustration is simplified and not to scale. Brand names belong to their owners; GSMC is not affiliated with any manufacturer.