PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Ketamine

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Ketalar

Brand Names: Canada

Ketalar

What is this drug used for?

- It is used for anesthesia before or during some procedures or surgery.
- This drug is not approved for use in children younger than 16 years old. The risk of some side effects may be raised. However, the doctor may decide the benefits of taking this drug outweigh the risks. If your child has been given this drug, ask the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions about giving this drug to your child.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or

OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness for at least 24 hours after your child gets this drug. These include things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles. Have your child avoid these tasks or actions until the effects of this drug wear off and your child feels fully awake.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- Talk with your child's doctor before your child uses marijuana, other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child's actions.
- The doctor will watch blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen levels closely. Talk with the doctor.
- Have blood work checked if your child is on this drug for a long time. Talk with your child's doctor.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

For procedures or surgery:

- Some mood and behavior changes have happened as the effects of this drug wear off. This has ranged from pleasant, dream-like states to hallucinations, agitation, confusion, and other behavior changes. Most of the time, these problems have lasted a few hours. Be sure an adult that can be trusted helps your child for as long as the doctor has told you after your child gets this drug.
- Studies in young animals and children have shown that frequent or long-term use of anesthesia drugs or drugs used for sleep in children younger than 3 years of age may lead to long-term brain problems. This may also happen in unborn babies if the mother uses this drug during the third trimester of pregnancy. Talk with the doctor.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of high or low blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Signs of liver or bile duct problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Trouble breathing, slow breathing, or shallow breathing.
- Feeling confused.
- Muscle stiffness.

- Fast, slow, or abnormal heartbeat.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).
- Change in the way your child acts.
- Mood changes.
- Seizures.
- Change in eyesight.
- Not able to control eye movements.
- Trouble passing urine, pain when passing urine, passing urine in a weak stream or drips, or passing urine more often.
- Blood in the urine.
- Pelvis or side pain.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Feeling sleepy.
- Decreased appetite.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Irritation where this drug is given.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as an injection into a muscle or vein.
- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.
- It may be given other ways. If this drug is given another way, talk with the doctor for more information.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or

get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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Last Reviewed Date

2026-04-22

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Ketamine - Last updated on December 12, 2022

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