

# Ketamine: Harm Reduction & Recognising Overdose

**Ketamine is a strong drug that affects the brain and body.**

It can:

- Affect balance and reduce awareness of surroundings
- Cause confusion or disorientation
- Make a person very still or unresponsive
- Lead to unconsciousness

## **Risk of Harm Increases when:**

- Larger amounts are taken
- It is mixed with alcohol
- It is mixed with benzodiazepines or other depressant drugs
- Someone uses alone
- The strength is stronger than expected

Mixing substances significantly increases risk – even in small amounts.

## **RECOVERY POSITION**

**1. Put the hand closest to you by the head (as if they were waving).**



**2. Put the arm furthest away from you across the chest, so that the back of the hand rests against the cheek.**



**3. Hold the hand and lift up the knee furthest away from you, then turn them on their side by pushing down on their knee.**



**4. Open their airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin, and check that nothing is blocking their airway.**



## **Longer-Term Health Risks:**

Regular ketamine use may lead to:

- Serious bladder damage
- Severe abdominal pain
- Memory and concentration problems
- Mental health difficulties

Early support can reduce harm.

**If you're worried about your own or someone else's ketamine use, support is available without judgement.**

## **Call 999 If Someone:**

- Is hard or impossible to wake
- Has slow, irregular or stopped breathing
- Has blue, grey or very pale lips
- Is making choking or gurgling sounds
- Is unconscious

Stay with the person until help arrives.

If they are breathing, place them in the recovery position.

## **Support in Moray:**

Arrows (Quarriers)

☎ 01343 610500

✉ [arrows@quarriers.org.uk](mailto:arrows@quarriers.org.uk)

NHS 111 – urgent advice