

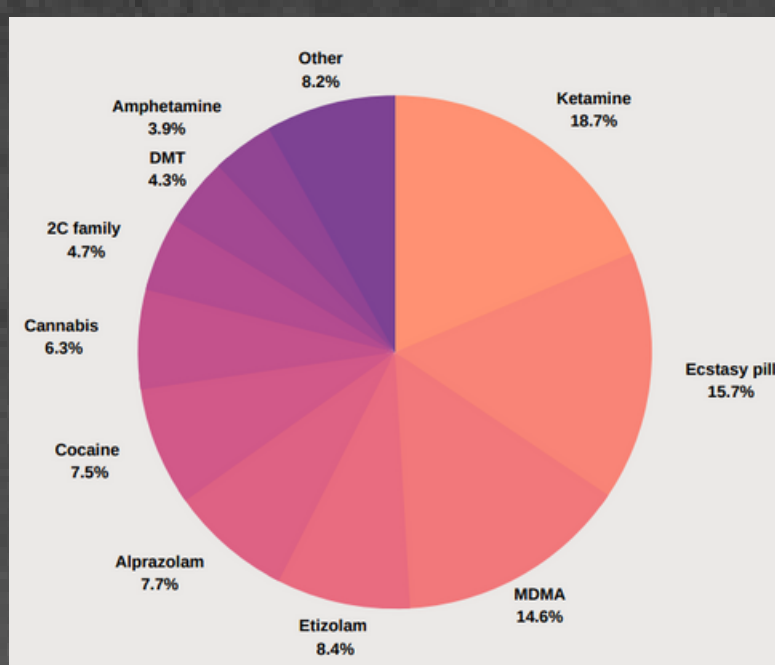
# DISSOCIATIVES

Dissociative drugs can make you feel calm, relaxed, happy and numb. Some dissociatives are used as anaesthetics in veterinary and human medicine. These drugs include nitrous oxide (laughing gas), methoxetamine and ketamine.

## KETAMINE

Ketamine (aka ket) can slow down the messages from your brain to your body, however, low doses may actually be stimulating. High doses can cause an 'out of the body' experience. It can affect your balance and coordination. Tolerance to ket can build quickly and people report taking ever-increasing doses to achieve the desired effect.

The percentage of Crew counselling clients reporting its use has increased from 2.3% in 2014/15 to 11.9% in 2018/19. Moreover, it is commonly mixed with alcohol and other drugs. Ketamine was also Crew's most visited 'drug information' site from September 2018 until March 2019, as shown in the pie chart to the right.



## STAY SAFE

The safest thing to do is to not consume drugs, but if you choose to, here are some safety tips:

- Taking bigger amounts of ketamine, and taking it frequently, means higher risks. The most severe harms, including permanent bladder damage, affect people who take ketamine regularly. First time users should be especially cautious with dose. Some users plan and measure out how much they intend to take, and only have that amount accessible.
- If you are anxious, or feeling down, the drug may exaggerate these feelings and give you a terrible experience. Additionally, if you are in a stressful, unfamiliar environment with strangers, the risk of having a bad time, or experiencing physical harm, is increased.
- Ketamine works in several ways to make you particularly vulnerable to accidental injury and death; even smaller amounts will decrease your ability to make sensible decisions or recognize dangers (like roads). Larger amounts have anaesthetic effects; being numb to one's surroundings is dangerous: people have died by lying outside on a cold night without awareness of the cold, and by falling unconscious in the bath and drowning.
- If you or a close relative has ever suffered from schizophrenia or another serious psychiatric condition, you are at an especially high risk of harm using ketamine. The drug has been proven to bring back symptoms of psychosis.
- Drugs which radically affect consciousness are more likely to cause panic and fear in people who suffer anxiety, whether this has been diagnosed as a disorder or not.
- Ketamine increases heart-rate and blood pressure. These effects are usually quite minor but could be dangerous for people with related health problems or who combine it with other drugs.

Sources:

<https://www.crew.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Drugs-at-Crew-Trend-Report-2017-2019.pdf>;

<https://www.oxfordsu.org/resourcehub/harmreductionketamine/>