

# Ketamine may not be an actual antidepressant, but may decrease the burden of symptoms

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One 10 ml vial of 1000 mg ketamine. Credit: Psychonaught/Wikipedia

A new study indicates that the antidepressant effects of ketamine may not be such, according to a paper published in *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*. The study investigates the hypothesis that depressed individual receiving ketamine infusions, associate feelings of lightness and floating which are a typical occurrence in the use of psychoactive-substance, with an antidepressant state.

In a systematic YouTube search of depressed individuals using ketamine infusions, 17 out of 62 testifiers (27.4 percent) spontaneously reported experiencing a sense of lightness—or less heaviness—that they associated with a reduction in [depressive symptoms](#). This result is in contrast with the fact that a literature search did not find a single article that addressed the question if a ketamine-induced sense of lightness might be associated with antidepressant benefits for depressed individuals. Furthermore, compared to [depressed individuals](#) receiving [electroconvulsive therapy](#) (comparison group), an analog systematic analysis of internet video testimonials showed that antidepressant-associated lightness is rarely reported (4 percent).

Authors suggested that future studies should focus on investigating the link between a subjective sense of lightness and antidepressant benefits suggesting a potential role could be played by the ketamine-induced opioid-system activation.

**More information:** Kurt Stocker et al. The Altered-State-of-Consciousness Aspect of a Feeling of Lightness Is Reported to Be Associated with Antidepressant Benefits by Depressed Individuals Receiving Ketamine Infusions: A Systematic Analysis of Internet Video Testimonials, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* (2019). [DOI: 10.1159/000497441](#)

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