



# Maine Drug Monitoring Initiative

## Maine Information and Analysis Center



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**(U) Purpose:** *This Maine Drug Monitoring Initiative (DMI) report is a collection of information obtained from various sources and partners, including but not limited to public health, law enforcement, and EMS. The MIAC welcomes the sharing of information that your agency believes may be beneficial to this report and to other agencies.*

### **(U) Public Health Awareness – Ketamine**

Ketamine, with street names including Cat Tranquilizer, Cat Valium, Jet K, Kit Kat, Purple, Special K, Special La Coke, Super Acid, Super K, Vitamin K, is a dissociative anesthetic that produces hallucinations. It distorts perceptions of sight and sound making the user feel disconnected and not in control. It is an injectable, short-acting anesthetic for use in humans and animals. It is referred to as a “dissociative anesthetic” because it makes patients feel detached from their pain and environment. Ketamine can induce a state of sedation, immobility, relief from pain, and amnesia. It may be abused due to its ability to produce dissociative sensations and hallucinations. An overdose of Ketamine can cause unconsciousness and dangerously slowed breathing.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) Drug database, which collects scientifically verified data on drug items and cases submitted to and analyzed by participating federal, state and local forensic laboratories in the United States, there have been nearly 38,000 reports of illicit distribution of ketamine, including 1,949 reports in 2021 and 2,008 reports in 2022.<sup>2</sup>

During July 2019 to June 2023, there was an increase nationally in overdose deaths with ketamine detected, according to research published in the 7 November 2024 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. During this period, ketamine was detected in <1% of overdose deaths and was the only drug involved in 24 deaths and the percentage of overdose deaths with ketamine detected in toxicology reports increased from 0.3% (47 deaths) to 0.5% (107 deaths). Approximately 82% of deaths with ketamine detected in toxicology reports involved other substances, including illegally manufactured fentanyl, methamphetamine, or cocaine. "As polysubstance use and use of ketamine for treatment resistant depression and in compounded formulations increase, continued monitoring is needed to identify potential changes in the detection and involvement of ketamine in overdose deaths."<sup>3</sup>

### **(U) Maine Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL)**

The Maine HETL is responsible for a number of functions related to the safety of Maine residents including work completed by their forensic chemistry section which provides accurate, reliable, timely, and state of the art scientific analysis and subsequent expert testimony in the areas of controlled substances and toxicology. The service is provided primarily to Criminal Justice Agencies of the State of Maine in regard to evidence submitted by them, although the Forensic Director may authorize the occasional acceptance of other work related to governmental agency investigations.<sup>4</sup>

The following is a summary of illicit substances that were detected through forensic examination completed in the month of October by the Maine HETL of seized drugs submitted by Maine law enforcement agencies. The list is organized alphabetically and does not reflect the number of samples containing each substance or the quantity of each substance. It is important to note that tested samples of material sometimes contain more than one illicit substance in a variety of combinations:

4-ANPP, Bromazolam, Cocaine Base, Cocaine Hydrochloride, Dimethyltryptamine, Fentanyl, Fluorofentanyl, Gabapentin, Heroin, Methamphetamine Hydrochloride, Methylphenidate, Oxycodone, Xylazine

**(U) Maine Drug Data Hub**

(U) The most recent monthly overdose report from the Maine Drug Data Hub reports that fatal overdoses in Maine continue to decline. The total number of confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses January–October 2024 is 405, 21.0% lower than the total confirmed fatal overdoses for the same period in 2023, 513. For additional information, please visit [Maine Monthly Overdose Report for October 2024](#).

**(U) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Releases DAWN Network Watch: Monitoring Drug Street Names added to DAWN**

(U) The SAMHSA Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) has released the DAWN Network Watch. When drug names are identified in DAWN’s substance-related emergency department visit data, they are checked against DAWN’s drug database. Any drug name or street name not currently listed in the database is added. This Network Watch presents drug street names that appeared in DAWN data for the first time from January 2023 to August 2024. Understanding drug slang improves communication and awareness, helps identify substance abuse, and can avoid misunderstandings of the substances involved in street drugs. For additional information, please visit [DAWN Network Watch | SAMHSA Publications and Digital Products](#).

**(U) U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts 6 December 2024 Press Release. Twenty-Five Charged in Connection with Multi-State Fentanyl and Cocaine Conspiracy**

(U) Twenty-five individuals have been charged in connection with a drug trafficking conspiracy involving fentanyl and cocaine with activity that spanned across eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Over 2.3 kilograms of fentanyl, 12 kilograms of suspected fentanyl and cocaine, 300 grams of cocaine, six firearms and approximately \$400,000 was seized during the investigation. For additional information, please visit [District of Massachusetts | Twenty-Five Charged in Connection with Multi-State Fentanyl and Cocaine Conspiracy | United States Department of Justice](#)

**(U) CDC Reports Decrease in OD Deaths Involving Illegally Manufactured Fentanyls, Increase in those Involving Carfentanil**

(U) While U.S. drug overdose deaths involving illegally manufactured fentanyls began declining in late 2023, there was a sharp increase in overdose deaths with carfentanil detected. For additional information, please visit [Detection of Illegally Manufactured Fentanyls and Carfentanil in Drug Overdose Deaths — United States, 2021–2024 | MMWR](#)

Survey: <https://tinyurl.com/y5uboh4d>

Tracked by MIAC SINS: 04, 17

**Sources:**

<sup>1</sup>*Ketamine*. Drug Enforcement Administration. Retrieved December 12, 2024, from [www.dea.gov/factsheets/ketamine](http://www.dea.gov/factsheets/ketamine)

<sup>2</sup>*Ketamine*. February 2024. Drug Enforcement Administration Diversion Control Division Drug & Chemical Evaluation Section. Retrieved December 12, 2024, from [www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_chem\\_info/ketamine.pdf](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_chem_info/ketamine.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Vivolo-Kantor AM, Mattson CL, Zlotorzynska M. Notes from the Field: Ketamine Detection and Involvement in Drug Overdose Deaths — United States, July 2019–June 2023. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2024;73:1010–1012. Retrieved December 12, 2024, from DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7344a4>

<sup>4</sup>Maine.Gov. Division of Public Health Systems. Maine Health and Environmental Laboratory Sections. Retrieved December 10, 2024, from [Maine Health and Environmental Testing Lab - Divisions - Division of Public Health Systems | MeCDC | Maine DHHS](#)