

# Ketamine is Available Now for Patients in Chicago

*Every individual can benefit from a unique and customized treatment plan that considers the various factors that brought them to ketamine therapy*

CHICAGO, IL, USA, March 21, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- By all accounts, humans are in the midst

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*Dr. Rachel Norris*

of a global mental health crisis. Conditions such as [depression](#) and anxiety are on the rise in many countries, including the U.S., with the World Health Organization (WHO) estimating that one in four people worldwide will be affected by mental or neurological disorders at some point in their lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated this crisis and the stress and uncertainty caused by the pandemic have led to an increase in mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety.

“The lack of attention and funding for mental health in the U.S. is failing its citizens. Clinicians and mental health

providers are seeing this first hand, with many patients, even suicidal ones, unable to get appointments or medicine approved quickly,” says Dr. Rachel Norris, owner and chief medical officer of Imagine Healthcare, a [ketamine](#) mental health and wellness clinic in Chicago. “Mental health professionals are overwhelmed with patient needs they can’t always meet and many people across the country have turned to alternative therapies, including ketamine and psychedelics, to relieve their suffering.”

Imagine Healthcare is Chicago’s only ketamine clinic run by a palliative medicine doctor. Imagine Healthcare’s flagship offering is ketamine therapy, including FDA-approved [Spravato](#), but the clinic is a complete wellness destination offering hydration infusions and vitamin/mineral injections as well as various psychotherapy and psychiatry services. The clinic also hosts a weekly ketamine support group and educational/experiential sessions regularly.

Imagine Healthcare provides a unique “whole person” approach focused on improving each client's quality of life. The clinicians at Imagine Healthcare recognize that every individual can benefit from a unique and customized treatment plan that considers the various factors that brought them to this point of treatment in their lives.

Psychedelics and ketamine have both shown great promise in treating conditions such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psychedelic substances are illegal in most states and still extremely tightly regulated by the federal government. Ketamine, however, is not a psychedelic and is available now to help with a variety of mental health disorders including depression, anxiety and PTSD.

“Ketamine works more quickly than many conventional treatments and helps patients develop greater awareness of patterns or behaviors that may be impacting their symptoms,” says Norris. “Because of this, some people are coming to ketamine as a first-option, rather than a last resort treatment.”

Research in the open access trade journal *Neuropsychopharmacology* last fall reported that ketamine and psilocybin work in a similar way by increasing neuroplasticity, which is the brain's ability to change and adapt in response to new experiences. This could lead to the formation of new connections between brain cells, which could help to improve brain function over time. They also appear to have an effect on the default mode network (DMN) which is a network of brain regions that are active when the mind is at rest. This network is involved in self-referential thinking and rumination, which are common in depression. By decreasing activity in the DMN, these substances may help to reduce symptoms of depression by breaking up patterns of negative thinking.

Studies going as far back as 2019 studies by the National Institutes of Health, Yale University and others have shown that ketamine can quickly reduce symptoms of depression, even in people who have not responded to other treatments. This is likely due to ketamine's ability to rapidly increase the release of certain neurotransmitters, such as glutamate, which can have an immediate effect on mood. Additionally, ketamine may also promote the growth of new connections between brain cells, which could help to improve brain function over time.

While it is legal to undergo ketamine treatments there are a few things prospective patients should know before starting. Ketamine is not FDA-approved for mental health disorders, which means that providers are using it “off-label” when treating conditions such as depression and choosing a skilled and experienced provider is critically important. Finding a knowledgeable provider who thoroughly evaluates each patient and customizes an individualized care plan is essential as is researching the setting in which treatments will take place. A patient should feel safe, comfortable, and well cared for.

In Illinois, there is a glimmer of hope for those waiting for psilocybin treatment options. A bill was introduced last month in Springfield by Representative LaShawn Ford that would legalize the therapeutic use of psilocybin, a naturally-occurring psychedelic compound found in certain species of mushrooms. Unfortunately, the legislative and administrative process can take some time, years most likely.

A diverse coalition of advocates, *Entheo IL*, including doctors, researchers, grassroots leaders, patients, and caregivers, agree that entheogens, such as psilocybin, can save lives and provide

healing to many suffering from mental health challenges. Norris is the director of professional education of Entheo, as well as an active board member of the Illinois Psychedelic Society.

Patients should know they have options for mental health if their current treatment plan isn't working, and with work in Springfield by Rep. Ford and others, there will hopefully be another option on the horizon.

To learn more about Imagine Healthcare, Dr. Norris, and ketamine infusion treatments, visit the clinic at [www.imaginehealthcare.org](http://www.imaginehealthcare.org).

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