

## Fighting depression: Nasal-based ketamine spray clears key FDA hurdle

One of the largest hurdles to ketamine becoming a mainstream depression treatment may have just been cleared.

On [February 12], an independent expert panel [convened](#) by the Food and Drug Administration discussed whether a nasal spray version of the drug developed by Johnson & Johnson should be approved by the FDA. In a majority vote, they agreed that the drug's benefits outweighed its risks in treating cases of depression that haven't responded to other treatments, though not without some conditions. The vote all but signals the drug's eventual approval, since the FDA rarely strays from these decisions.

...

What's made ketamine so enticing as an antidepressant is that its effects in boosting mood seem to [happen](#) within hours or even minutes, while other antidepressants can take weeks to work. That rapid action is [especially important](#) for people in middle of an immediate crisis who are struggling with suicidal ideation.

...

J&J's version is based on the chemically similar esketamine. Esketamine, Johnson & Johnson hoped, would cause fewer side-effects like sedation or dissociation while still providing a similar antidepressant effect.

**Read full, original post:** [A Ketamine-Based Nasal Spray for Depression Could Soon be Approved by the FDA](#)