Nearly 10 percent of ketamine abusers have liver injury

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(HealthDay)—Liver injury is seen in about 10 percent of chronic abusers of ketamine, according to a study published in the October issue of *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*.

Grace Lai-Hung Wong, M.B., Ch.B., M.D., from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and colleagues examined histopathologic and radiologic features of ketamine abusers with significant liver injury. Participants included 297 consecutive chronic ketamine abusers with urinary tract dysfunction. Liver injury was defined as raised parameters above two times the upper limit of normal in the liver biochemistry panel. Seven patients with significantly abnormal enzymes underwent percutaneous liver biopsy, and six patients underwent magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography.

The researchers found that the prevalence of liver injury was 9.8 percent (cholestatic in all cases). In all seven patients assessed by liver biopsy, bile duct injury was observed. Despite their young age, two patients had bridging fibrosis. Prominent or dilated common bile ducts without obstructions or extrinsic compression were identified in three of the six patients who underwent magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography.

"Ketamine abuse therefore appears to lead to common bile duct dilatation, microscopic bile duct injury, and even significant liver fibrosis," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: Abstract
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