

TRIP

TREATMENT & RESEARCH IN
PSYCHEDELICS

Pacific Treatment & Research In PsychedelicsSM (TRIPSM) Center
at Pacific Neuroscience Institute[®] is dedicated to the development of psychedelic-assisted therapies and the scientific exploration of how altered states of consciousness can be harnessed to change behavior and improve brain health and quality of life.

PacificTrip.org | PacificNeuro.org

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**PACIFIC
NEUROSCIENCE
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THINK NEURO. THINK PNI.



PSYCHEDELIC-ASSISTED THERAPY AT THE TRIP PROGRAM

Psychedelics were first used by indigenous cultures in shamanic and other healing rituals. Today we are working to develop psychedelic treatments for a variety of conditions including Major Depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders, end-of-life and palliative care settings, and drug and alcohol use disorders.

HOW DOES PSYCHEDELIC-ASSISTED THERAPY WORK?

Patients often feel **STUCK** in a repetitive cycle of depression, anxiety, compulsions, cravings, or harmful behaviors. Medications may reduce symptoms but relapse is common when the medication is stopped. Psychotherapy aims to change unhealthy thoughts or behaviors but this process is often slow and may never achieve the breakthrough needed to produce sustained change.

In psychedelic-assisted therapy, the psychedelic medicine induces a transient and profound altered state of consciousness that aims to enhance self exploration and accelerate the psychotherapy process.

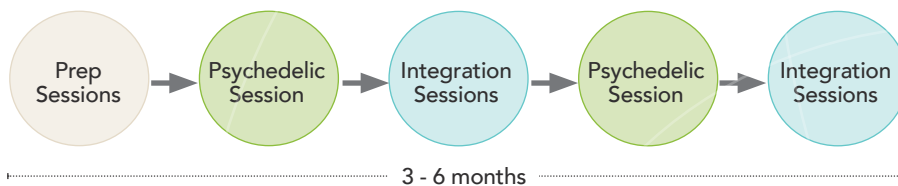
The psychedelic medicine allows patients to better access their subconscious, address their core underlying issues, and connect with their inner capacity to heal emotionally. Biologically, psychedelic medicines may facilitate change by resetting a brain region called the Default Mode Network and triggering increased synaptic plasticity. As a result, in addition to reducing symptoms, patients may undergo a personal transformation, become **UNSTUCK**, and achieve a more rapid and sustained change compared to standard treatments.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Psychedelic-assisted therapy involves administering a psychedelic medicine to a patient under clinical supervision to trigger an altered state of consciousness or mystical experience. A course of treatment typically involves a program of psychotherapy with 1-3 psychedelic dosing sessions usually over 3-6 months.

Pre-psychedelic dosing **preparatory counseling sessions** prepare the patient to get the maximum benefit from the dosing session and subsequent integration counseling.

The **psychedelic dosing session** is done in one of our special “trip rooms” designed to facilitate a safe and therapeutic journey. Patients lie on a couch, wear eyeshades, and listen to music to facilitate a focus on the internal emotional experience. A physician monitors the patient for safety.



Afterward, patients complete a series of **integration therapy sessions** to assist them in applying insights from the dosing session to make changes in their lives. Additional psychedelic sessions may occur if needed.

This model can be used with a variety of psychedelic medications including psilocybin (“magic mushrooms”), MDMA, LSD, and ketamine. At the TRIP Program, patients may receive psychedelic-assisted therapy via our Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP) program or by enrolling in a clinical trial.

KETAMINE-ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY

Ketamine is approved for use at high doses as an anesthetic in the operating room. Although not FDA-approved, lower dose “sub-anesthetic” ketamine injections are used “off-label” to treat depression, pain, and other mental health/substance use disorders.

Our program includes one or a few in-clinic ketamine dosing sessions under clinician supervision integrated with preparatory and integration counseling. By harnessing the potential psychedelic effects of ketamine we aim to achieve more sustained results with fewer ketamine treatments compared to IV ketamine infusions without accompanying psychotherapy.

Patients with depression, anxiety, PTSD, end-of-life distress, chronic pain, drug/alcohol problems, and other conditions may be eligible for psychedelic-assisted therapy with ketamine at the TRIP program.

PSYCHEDELIC-ASSISTED CLINICAL TRIALS

Our TRIP clinical trials team is working to develop new psychedelic therapies and advance psychedelic medications including psilocybin to FDA approval.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is psychedelic-assisted therapy FDA-approved?

No psychedelic-assisted therapy is FDA-approved although clinical trials with psilocybin (from “magic mushrooms”) and MDMA are underway. Ketamine is FDA-approved as an anesthetic but can be used “off-label” in psychedelic-assisted therapy outside of clinical trials.

What conditions can be treated with psychedelic-assisted therapy?

Based on prior studies dating back to the 1950’s and more recent clinical trials, patients with depression, anxiety, PTSD, end-of-life distress, chronic pain, and/or drug or alcohol problems may be candidates for psychedelic-assisted therapy.

How is psychedelic-assisted therapy different than taking a psychedelic drug?

Psychedelic-assisted therapy is under a doctor’s supervision, includes counseling and clinical support before, during, and after the psychedelic dosing session, and the medication is part of an integrated program of psychotherapy and self exploration as opposed to providing the drug as an isolated treatment. *Taking a psychedelic drug outside of medical treatment or a clinical trial is in most cases illegal and not something we can recommend or assist with.*

What if I have a “bad trip” during my psychedelic-assisted therapy?

The goal of psychedelic-assisted therapy is to facilitate accessing deep emotional issues such that they can be addressed in subsequent integration counseling sessions. The psychedelic treatment may bring up anxiety, fear, or difficult or challenging emotions or memories which is why we will be at your side to assist and support you before, during, and after the psychedelic session. Research suggests that the intensity of the psychedelic experience is one of the best predictors of a therapeutic response, even when the experience is difficult or challenging. Therefore we do not consider a difficult session to be a “bad trip” but instead focus on supporting you and assisting you in maximizing the benefit you can obtain from the experience whether it is pleasant, challenging, or both.

What are some possible side effects of psychedelic-assisted therapy?

Blood pressure and heart rate typically increase during the dosing session and there is a risk of cardiovascular complications especially in patients with cardiac disease. There is a very small risk of developing persistent perceptual disturbances or hallucinations after the psychedelic dosing session although this risk seems to be less than with recreational or non-medical psychedelic use. There is a small risk of abuse or addiction to psychedelic drugs which is why psychedelic-assisted therapy involves a limited number of dosing sessions at the clinic under medical supervision followed by counseling and clinical monitoring. Like all therapies, there is a chance that psychedelic-assisted therapy will not work for your condition.

Is psychedelic-assisted therapy “microdosing?”

“Microdosing” psychedelics involves taking sub-psychedelic doses of a psychedelic on a regular schedule (e.g every 3 days) often chronically. Microdosing of psychedelics is purported to have beneficial effects on mood and cognitive performance but few controlled studies of microdosing have been done to date. In contrast, most clinical trials of psychedelic-assisted therapy use a full psychedelic dose, usually administered once or only a few times over several months.

Is psychedelic-assisted therapy covered by insurance?

Counseling and/or doctor visits before and after the psychedelic dosing sessions typically involve standard care and may be billable to insurance. The ketamine psychedelic dosing session, which involves several hours of treatment and monitoring under medical supervision at the clinic, is not currently billable to insurance and out-of-pocket cost is approximately \$1,200 per session. Some costs for patients in clinical trials may be paid for by the sponsor.

PNI'S SPECIALIST



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Dr. Keith Heinzerling practices internal medicine and is an addiction medicine specialist at the Pacific Brain Health Center, Pacific Neuroscience Institute. His clinical and research focuses are on the treatment of alcohol, drug and substance use problems, with anti-addiction medications. As director of the Pacific TRIP Center, he is involved in the development of psychedelic-assisted therapies for those suffering with addiction, depression, anxiety, PTSD, and other mental health conditions.

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