

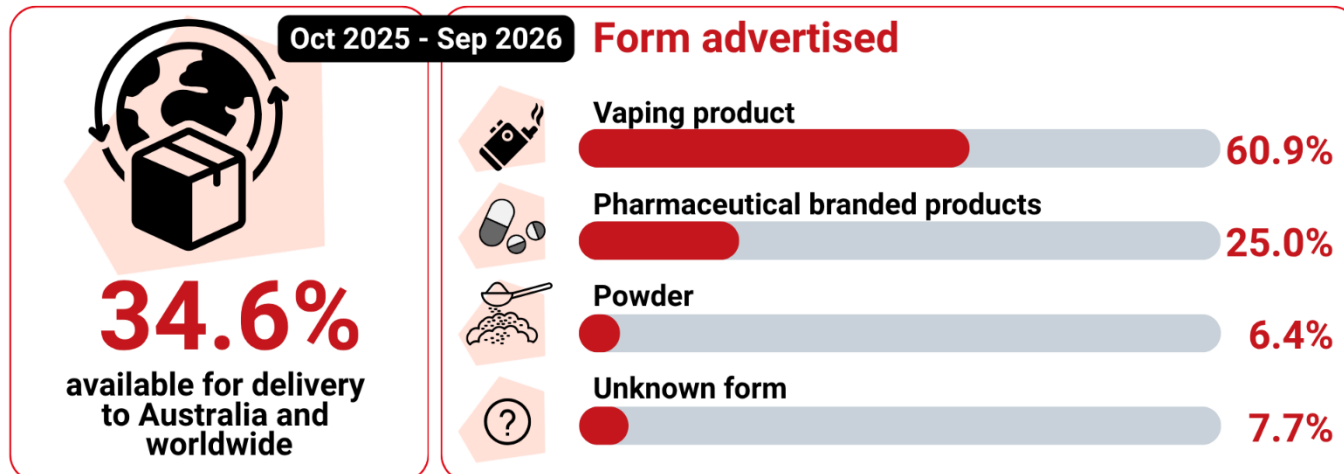
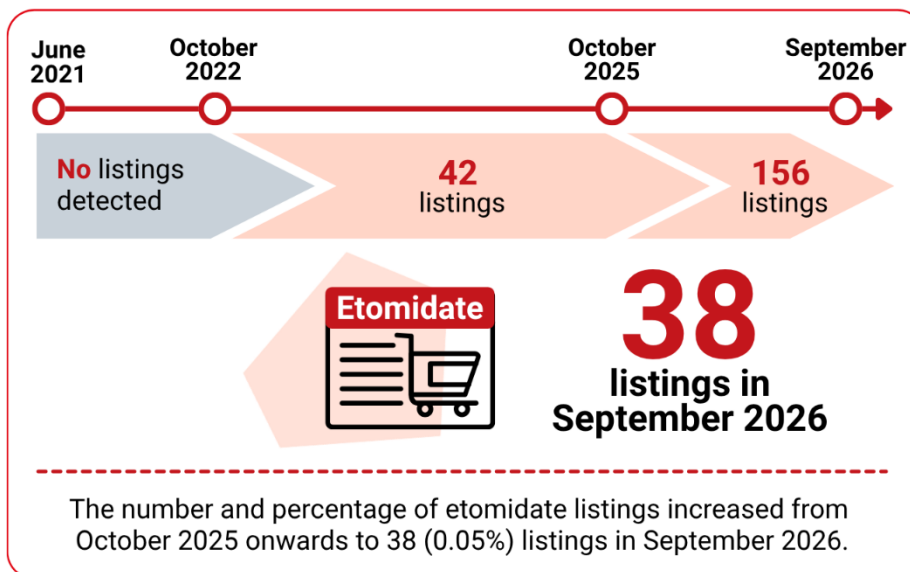


Availability of etomidate for purchase in Australia via cryptomarkets, June 2021 – September 2026

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This report was prepared by the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney

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Introduction

Etomidate is a short-acting intravenous anaesthetic that has been used clinically because of its rapid onset (1). However, its use is limited due to risks associated with the inhibition of adrenal steroid synthesis. It is generally classified as a novel psychoactive substance and it had emerged in recent years in illicit drug markets in Asia (2). Data on the presence of etomidate in Australia is quite limited, with the exception of a report of etomidate detected in a vape product sold in Melbourne in June 2026 (3).

While only a small proportion of drug purchases occur via cryptomarkets ('darknet marketplaces'), there is some evidence that these marketplaces are being used for the sale and purchase of new psychoactive substances in Australia (4). Given rising concerns regarding etomidate and etomidate-containing vaping products, this bulletin reports on etomidate listings on the cryptomarkets.

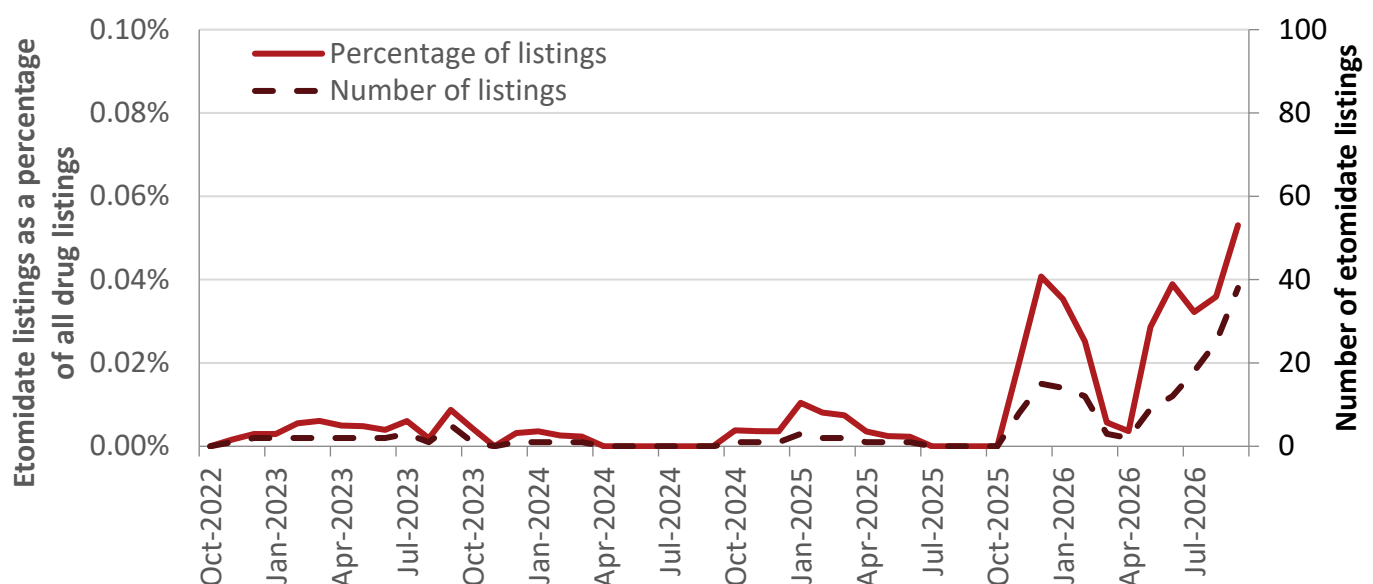
Methods and Results

- Monthly data on drug listings were extracted from the cryptomarket data collection from June 2021 to September 2026. For more information on the cryptomarket data, please refer to the [Drugs and New Technologies \(DNet\) bulletin](#) (5).
- Regular expression searches for terms identifying etomidate and its analogues such as "etomidate", "Celodate", "butomidate", "space oil", "ABP-700" and "isopropoxate" were used to extract potentially relevant cryptomarket listings. The searches were determined based on terms reported by UNODC (6). These were extended to include spelling errors. The listings were then vetted and those identifying other drugs were excluded.
- Data on availability for delivery to Australia were also extracted. Forms of the drug was identified by keywords for vaping products (e.g. "pod", "pen"), brands for pharmaceutical branded products (e.g., "celodate"), or primarily as a "powder". Listings not identified as a vaping product, a pharmaceutical branded product or a powder were classified as an unknown form.

Has the availability of etomidate on cryptomarkets changed over time?

- 198 etomidate listings were identified; no listings for etomidate analogues were identified in the study period.
- No etomidate listings were identified between June 2021 and October 2022. There were relatively few etomidate listings observed in the monthly snapshots between November 2022 and October 2025, with a maximum of 5 listings in the September 2023 snapshot or 0.01% of drug listings in the January 2025 snapshot.
- The number and percentage of etomidate listings then increased, reaching 38 listings or 0.05% of drug listings at the end of the time series in September 2026 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percentage and number of etomidate listings, October 2022 to September 2026



Note: The percentage axis is truncated for visibility as the percentage of etomidate listings on cryptomarkets was very small. As there were no etomidate listings between June 2021 and October 2022, the horizontal time axis was also truncated to start from October 2022 for visibility.

What was their availability for delivery to Australia?

- Of the 156 etomidate listings identified in the 12 months between October 2025 and September 2026, 54 (34.6%) listings were available for delivery to Australia. All etomidate listings that delivered to Australia were listings that offered worldwide delivery.

What were the main forms of etomidate listed for sale on cryptomarkets?

- Of the 156 etomidate listings identified in the 12 months to September 2026, 60.9% (n=95) were identified as a vaping product (e.g. pods or pens) and 25.0% (n=39) were identified with pharmaceutical brands of etomidate (i.e., Celodate or Troymidate). The rest were described either as a powder (6.4%; n=10) or in an unknown form (7.7%; n=12).

Discussion

Etomidate was rarely detected on cryptomarkets during the study period. No listings were identified between June 2021 and October 2022, and only small numbers were observed until late 2025. From October 2025 onwards, availability increased reaching 38 listings in September 2026, although etomidate still accounted for less than 0.1% of all cryptomarket drug listings. No etomidate analogues were identified. About a third of the etomidate listings were available for delivery to Australia between October 2025 and September 2026. They were exclusively supplied through vendors offering worldwide delivery rather than being specific to Australia. Vaping products was the dominant form of etomidate advertised for sale. Pharmaceutical branded products were also available.

Several limitations should be noted. Cryptomarket listings are a proxy for availability rather than confirmed sales, and observed trends may be affected by market volatility, including platform closures. The listed drug that was being advertised also might not be the actual drug being sold (7,8). Our study was limited to English-language markets, excluding potentially relevant platforms (e.g., Russian-language markets) that may be relevant to Australia.

Overall, the findings suggest that etomidate remains an uncommon substance on cryptomarkets, but its availability has increased since late 2025. While vaping products as a popular form align with other reports (2,3), we additionally found evidence of products in pharmaceutical form on the cryptomarkets.

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Data visualisations: <https://drugtrends.shinyapps.io/cryptomarkets>

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