

Date Rape Drugs What You Need to Know

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INTRODUCTION

Date rape drugs are particularly dangerous because they incapacitate the victims and prevent them from fighting back, from screaming or yelling, from running away, from assessing their options, and from negotiating with the assailant.

Victims can not even remember basic information about what happened, about the perpetrator, or about the location of the crime. As one victim stated, "Rape is never a fair fight, but I didn't even have a chance to defend myself." (National Institute of Justice Journal, April 2000)

BEFORE SHOWING "DATE RAPE DRUGS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Preview the video yourself, read this discussion guide, make copies of the handouts on the drugs, on what to do to reduce risks, on what to do if you have been given an date rape drug and/or been raped and the list of resources. Introduce the video by summarizing the main messages of the program. Note although all the drugs mentioned in the video are date rape drugs there are some differences between that will be explained in the handouts. Also explain that men, as well as women, can be victims of date rape drugs.

Research phone numbers of local sexual assault centers, local hotline numbers, local university and college resources, including campus police. It is a good idea to create a handout with the local phone numbers on it, or to add them to the "Resources" section. You can also write the numbers on a board. Ask everyone to write down the numbers so that no one is forced to write alone, thus singling them out. This protects each person's privacy.

Leave enough time after showing the video for a discussion period to debrief the viewers. A program on date rape may bring up unpleasant feelings and memories, so it is important to allow time for them to talk about it. Offer to talk privately with anyone who does not feel comfortable speaking in a large group. There may be someone who is prompted to seek further help through the resources that you have listed.

AFTER SHOWING THE VIDEO

It is a good idea to leave the lights off for a few moments after the video ends. This will also allow people to reflect and collect their thoughts and feelings before joining in the discussion. Be alert and sensitive to anyone who looks upset or distraught, whether they are male or female. You may be surprised at the impact this video will have on the males and females in the audience. If anyone does not want to join the discussion, respect that right. Do urge everyone, however, to contact the resources you have mentioned if they would like more help or information on the subject, and assure them that they are not alone. Be sure to give the handouts to each student.

ROHYPNOL

WHAT IS IT - Rohypnol is a very potent tranquilizer, similar to Valium, but much stronger. It acts as a central nervous system depressant that produces a “drunk effect”. Rohypnol is manufactured by Hoffman-Roche Pharmaceuticals and is sold in 80 countries, but it is illegal to bring into this country and is illegal to manufacture, distribute or possess it for sale in the United States. It is prescribed for people with severe sleep disorders, and as a pre-anesthetic before surgery and medical procedures.

RECOGNIZING ROHYPNOL - It comes in 0.5, and 1.0 to 2.0 milligram tablet form, as well as solution form. It is colorless, odorless and tasteless and dissolves without leaving any traces. Rohypnol is trafficked to street dealers and college towns throughout the country. A tablet can be purchased for \$1 to \$5, and is often distributed on the street in its bubble packaging, thus appearing legitimate and legal. Because it has been illegal in the U.S. it is not listed in many drug identification sources and can be difficult to identify.

STREET NAMES - Roofies, roche, R-2, rib, rope, mind eraser, forget pill.

EFFECTS – Ten to twenty minutes after ingesting Rohypnol a person may feel dizzy, disoriented, too hot or too cold and nauseated. The peak may come in one to two hours, and depending on the dosage, the overall sedating effects can last up to 8 to 12 hours, and may not fully wear off for several days. Mixing the drug with alcohol, narcotic drugs, or other central nervous system depressants can make it much more dangerous, and may cause respiratory depression, amnesia lasting 8 to 24 hours, aspiration and possible death. Rohypnol can be found in the urine for 72 hours after ingestion, and may be present even longer, depending on a person’s metabolism and dosage. It can be detected in the blood for 24 hours after ingestion. The list of effects includes:

- Decreased blood pressure
- Tiredness
- Problems with vision
- Dizziness and confusion, hallucinations
- Difficulty speaking, slurred speech
- Nervousness
- Aggressive behavior
- Black outs lasting up to 24 hours
- Sedation
- Muscle relaxation
- Disorientation, difficulty walking
- Nausea
- Lack of inhibition
- Fearlessness
- Complete or partial amnesia of events that occurred while on the drug

GAMMA-HYDROXYBUTYRATE - GHB

WHAT IS IT – GHB is a depressant and was originally developed as an anesthetic. It was formerly sold by health-food stores and gyms as a sleep aid,

fat burner, enhancer of muscle definition, and natural psychedelic, and was pulled off the market in 1990 because of its bad side effects. GHB is extremely dangerous because it can be made inexpensively made from easily-available, volatile solvents and caustic sodas.

RECOGNIZING GHB - GHB is sold in white powdered form that looks like laundry flakes, in a clear, syrupy liquid form, or capsule form, and all can be dissolved in liquid. It can be snorted, smoked or mixed in drinks, and is often carried in small bottles, such as eye drop bottles. It can also may have an unpleasant, plastic, salty taste and even mild odor that can be masked by mixing it with a sweet liquor or fruit drink.

STREET NAMES – G, Liquid X, Liquid E, Scoop, Soap, Gook, Grievous Bodily Harm, Georgia Home Boy, Natural Sleep-500, Easy Lay, Gamma 10, Energy Drink.

EFFECTS – GHB acts even faster than Rohypnol. Within five to twenty minutes after oral ingestion effects are felt, and acute symptoms appear to decrease after three to four hours. The effects are unpredictable and very dose-dependent. If combined with alcohol the effects may last 20 to 30 hours, and can be fatal. GHB can cause severe reactions when combined with alcohol, benzodiazepines, opiates, anticonvulsants, and allergy remedies. GHB is remains in the blood for up to 4 hours, and in the urine for up to 12 hours. Effects include:

- Amnesia
- Loss of inhibition, giddiness, silliness and dizziness
- Abrupt and intense drowsiness, especially with large doses where it can occur with 5 to 10 minutes
- Vomiting
- Agitation
- Interference with mobility and verbal coherence
- Semi-consciousness or unconsciousness, seizure, coma
- Decreased heart rate
- Excessive salivation, decreased gag reflex
- Sleep-walking
- Decreased body temperature
- Slower, deep respiration
- Diarrhea
- Delusions, hallucination

KETAMINE

WHAT IS IT – Ketamine is a powerful anesthetic used as an animal tranquilizer. It has been approved for both human and animal use since 1970. About 90% of ketamine used today is intended for veterinary use.

RECOGNIZING KETAMINE – Ketamine is available in liquid, powder or pill form.

STREET NAMES – K, Special K, Vitamin K, Ket, Cat Valiums.

EFFECTS –

- Hallucinations
- Delirium
- Amnesia
- Dissociation, feeling where the mind feels separate from the body
- Impaired motor function
- High blood pressure
- Depression
- Potentially fatal respiratory problems

MDMA - ECSTASY

WHAT IS IT – MDMA or Methylenedioxymethamphetamine is similar to the stimulant amphetamine and hallucinogen mescaline, and can produce both stimulant and psychedelic effects.

RECOGNIZING MDMA – MDMA comes in tablet or capsule form.

STREET NAMES – Ecstasy, XTC, X, Adam, Clarity, Lover's Speed.

EFFECTS – Effects last about 3 to 6 hours though symptoms may occur weeks after the drug is taken. Chronic use can produce long-term damage to serotonin-containing neurons in the brain that regulate emotion, memory, sleep, pain and higher-order cognitive processes. Effects include:

- Confusion
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Increase in heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature
- Increase in sense of alertness
- Dehydration
- Hypertension
- Heart or kidney failure
- Heart attack, strokes and seizures
- Anxiety
- Paranoia

WHAT TO DO TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

- **Do not look for dates on the Internet**
- **Avoid drinking from open containers and punch bowls in situations when you're not sure of what is in them.**

- **Watch your drink while it's being made and delivered to you, alcoholic or non-alcoholic.**
- **Do not leave beverages unattended.**
- **If you can, take your drink with you wherever you go, even to the restroom.**
- **Leave your drink with someone you trust.**
- **If you leave it unattended throw it out and make a new one.**
- **Do not share or exchange drinks.**
- **Stick with drinks you're familiar with and be weary of drinks that you have never seen or heard of before.**
- **Do not drink any beverage with a funny taste, odor, residue, color or consistency.**
- **Do not take any beverage from someone you do not know well and trust.**
- **Accept drinks only from the bartender, or waitperson.**
- **Practice the buddy system. Watch out for you friends and ask them to watch out for you.**
- **Be aware of your surroundings, the people you're with and what they're doing.**
- **If you hear someone "kidding" about date rape drugs, pay attention and leave the individual and the gathering.**
- **Be alert to the behavior of friends who may appear unusually inebriated in relation to the amount of alcohol they have consumed.**
- **Tell your friends about high-risk places and situations, such as clubs where date rape drugs have been known to be used.**
- **If you have any doubts or concerns, don't drink at all.**

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN A DATE RAPE DRUG

- **Call 911 immediately, or go immediately to a hospital emergency room, or if on campus, call the campus police.**
- **Ask a trusted friend to help you.**

- Don't let someone you don't know step in as a "rescuer".
- Don't let anyone you don't know take you home, under any circumstances.
- Try to keep a sample of the beverage for analysis.
- Date rape drugs are more likely to be detected in urine, than in blood so it is very important to request a urine test for presence of sedating substances as quickly as possible. Tests should be able to detect Rohypnol, GHB, and other drugs.
- Trust your intuition when things don't seem right. It could save your life.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOU'VE BEEN INVOLVED IN A DRUG-FACILITATED RAPE

- Call 911 immediately, or go immediately to a hospital emergency room.
- Ask a trusted friend or family member to help you.
- Do not shower, bathe, douche, change clothes or clean up the area where the assault occurred. It is important to preserve evidence.
- Determine whether or not you want to report the incident to the police. If so, phone the police before you go to the hospital to have the medical evidence collected. Whether you report or not you should go to the hospital for any external or internal injuries, get a pregnancy test, STDs and support services.
- Try to keep a sample of the beverage for analysis.
- Date rape drugs are more likely to be detected in urine, than in blood so it is very important to request a urine test for presence of sedating substances as quickly as possible. The test should include Rohypnol, GHB, and other drugs.
- Call your local Sexual Assault Center for support and information.

DATE RAPE DRUGS AND THE LAW

- Under federal law simple possession of Rohypnol is punishable by a fine and up to 3 years in prison.
- Giving a person a drug without his or her knowledge with the intention of committing a violent crime against a person is a violation of the Drug-Induced Prevention and Punishment Act of 1996. You can receive a fine and sentence of up to 20 years in Prison.
- In some state possession and misuse of Rohypnol is also a violation of state laws.
- Nonconsensual sex, coerced sex, sex with a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs and not able to give consent is RAPE!

RESOURCES

**To find a rape treatment center in your area - RAINN –
800-656-HOPE (4673)**

National Rohypnol Information Line – 800-720-1076

**Joan Zorza, “Drug-Facilitated Rape”, Sexual Violence on
Campus, Politics, Programs, and Perspectives, Allen J. Ottens
and Kathy Hotelling, Editors**