



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

Date Rape Drugs

Q: What are date rape drugs?

A: These are drugs that are sometimes used to assist a sexual assault. Sexual assault is any type of sexual activity that a person does not agree to. It can include touching that is not okay; putting something into the vagina; sexual intercourse; rape; and attempted rape. These drugs are powerful and dangerous. They can be slipped into your drink when you are not looking. The drugs often have no color, smell, or taste, so you can't tell if you are being drugged. The drugs can make you become weak and confused — or even pass out — so that you are unable to refuse sex or defend yourself. If you are drugged, you might not remem-

ber what happened while you were drugged. Date rape drugs are used on both females and males.

The three most common date rape drugs are:

- **Rohypnol** (roh-HIP-nol). Rohypnol is the trade name for flunitrazepam (FLOO-neye-TRAZ-uh-pam). Abuse of two similar drugs appears to have replaced Rohypnol abuse in some parts of the United States. These are: clonazepam (marketed as Klonopin in the U.S. and Rivotril in Mexico) and alprazolam (marketed as Xanax).
- **GHB**, which is short for gamma hydroxybutyric (GAM-muh hey-DROX-ee-BYOO-tur-ihk) acid
- **Ketamine** (KEET-uh-meen)

These drugs also are known as “club drugs” because they tend to be used at dance clubs, concerts, and “raves.” They go by many street names:

Rohypnol is also known as:		
Circles	R-2	Rope
Forget Pill	Rib	Rophies
LA Rochas	Roach	Ruffies
Lunch Money	Roach-2	Trip-and-Fall
Mexican Valium	Roches	Whiteys
Mind Erasers	Roofies	
Poor Man's Quaalude	Roopies	

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

GHB is also known as:

Bedtime Scoop	G-Juice	Liquid Ecstasy
Cherry Meth	Gook	Liquid X
Easy Lay	Goop	PM
Energy Drink	Great Hormones	Salt Water
G	Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH)	Soap
Gamma 10		Somatomax
Georgia Home Boy	Liquid E	Vita-G

Ketamine is also known as:

Black Hole	Jet	Psychedelic Heroin
Bump	K	Purple
Cat Valium	K-Hole	Special K
Green	Kit Kat	Super Acid

The term “date rape” is widely used. But most experts prefer the term “drug-facilitated sexual assault.”

These drugs also are used to help people commit other crimes, like robbery and physical assault. They are used on both men and women. The term “date rape” also can be misleading because the person who commits the crime might not be dating the victim. Rather, it could be an acquaintance or stranger.

cola or dark beer, or in a dark room. Also, the pills with no dye are still available. The pills may be ground up into a powder.

- GHB has a few forms: a liquid with no odor or color, white powder, and pill. It might give your drink a slightly salty taste. Mixing it with a sweet drink, such as fruit juice, can mask the salty taste.
- Ketamine comes as a liquid and a white powder.

Q: What do the drugs look like?

A: • Rohypnol comes as a pill that dissolves in liquids. Some are small, round, and white. Newer pills are oval and green-gray in color. When slipped into a drink, a dye in these new pills makes clear liquids turn bright blue and dark drinks turn cloudy. But this color change might be hard to see in a dark drink, like

Q: What effects do these drugs have on the body?

A: These drugs are very powerful. They can affect you very quickly and without your knowing. The length of time that the effects last varies. It depends on how much of the drug is taken and if the drug is mixed with other drugs or alcohol. Alcohol makes the drugs even stronger and can cause serious health problems — even death.



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

Rohypnol

The effects of Rohypnol can be felt within 30 minutes of being drugged and can last for several hours. If you are drugged, you might look and act like someone who is drunk. You might have trouble standing. Your speech might be slurred. Or you might pass out. Rohypnol can cause these problems:

- Muscle relaxation or loss of muscle control
- Difficulty with motor movements
- Drunk feeling
- Problems talking
- Nausea
- Can't remember what happened while drugged
- Loss of consciousness (black out)
- Confusion
- Problems seeing
- Dizziness
- Sleepiness
- Lower blood pressure
- Stomach problems
- Death

GHB

GHB takes effect in about 15 minutes and can last 3 or 4 hours. It is very potent: A very small amount can have a big effect. So it's easy to overdose on GHB. Most GHB is made by people in home or street "labs." So, you don't know what's in it or how it will affect you. GHB can cause these problems:

- Relaxation
- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Nausea

- Problems seeing
- Loss of consciousness (black out)
- Seizures
- Can't remember what happened while drugged
- Problems breathing
- Tremors
- Sweating
- Vomiting
- Slow heart rate
- Dream-like feeling
- Coma
- Death

Ketamine

Ketamine is very fast-acting. You might be aware of what is happening to you, but unable to move. It also causes memory problems. Later, you might not be able to remember what happened while you were drugged. Ketamine can cause these problems:

- Distorted perceptions of sight and sound
- Lost sense of time and identity
- Out of body experiences
- Dream-like feeling
- Feeling out of control
- Impaired motor function
- Problems breathing
- Convulsions
- Vomiting
- Memory problems
- Numbness
- Loss of coordination
- Aggressive or violent behavior
- Depression



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

- High blood pressure
- Slurred speech

Q: Are these drugs legal in the United States?

A: Some of these drugs are legal when lawfully used for medical purposes. But that doesn't mean they are safe. These drugs are powerful and can hurt you. They should only be used under a doctor's care and order.

- *Rohypnol* is NOT legal in the United States. It is legal in Europe and Mexico, where it is prescribed for sleep problems and to assist anesthesia before surgery. It is brought into the United States illegally.
- *Ketamine* is legal in the United States for use as an anesthetic for humans and animals. It is mostly used on animals. Veterinary clinics are robbed for their ketamine supplies.
- *GHB* was recently made legal in the United States to treat problems from narcolepsy (a sleep disorder). Distribution of GHB for this purpose is tightly restricted.

Q: Is alcohol a date rape drug? What about other drugs?

A: Any drug that can affect judgment and behavior can put a person at risk for unwanted or risky sexual activity. Alcohol is one such drug. In fact, alcohol is the drug most commonly used to help commit sexual assault. When a person drinks too much alcohol:

- It's harder to think clearly.
- It's harder to set limits and make good choices.
- It's harder to tell when a situation could be dangerous.

- It's harder to say "no" to sexual advances.
- It's harder to fight back if a sexual assault occurs.
- It's possible to blackout and to have memory loss.

The club drug "ecstasy" (MDMA) has been used to commit sexual assault. It can be slipped into someone's drink without the person's knowledge. Also, a person who willingly takes ecstasy is at greater risk of sexual assault. Ecstasy can make a person feel "lovey-dovey" towards others. It also can lower a person's ability to give reasoned consent. Once under the drug's influence, a person is less able to sense danger or to resist a sexual assault.

Even if a victim of sexual assault drank alcohol or willingly took drugs, the victim is NOT at fault for being assaulted. You cannot "ask for it" or cause it to happen.

Q: How can I protect myself from being a victim?

- A:**
- Don't accept drinks from other people.
 - Open containers yourself.
 - Keep your drink with you at all times, even when you go to the bathroom.
 - Don't share drinks.
 - Don't drink from punch bowls or other common, open containers. They may already have drugs in them.
 - If someone offers to get you a drink from a bar or at a party, go with the person to order your drink. Watch



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

the drink being poured and carry it yourself.

- Don't drink anything that tastes or smells strange. Sometimes, GHB tastes salty.
- Have a nondrinking friend with you to make sure nothing happens.
- If you realize you left your drink unattended, pour it out.
- If you feel drunk and haven't drunk any alcohol — or, if you feel like the effects of drinking alcohol are stronger than usual — get help right away.

Q: Are there ways to tell if I might have been drugged and raped?

A: It is often hard to tell. Most victims don't remember being drugged or assaulted. The victim might not be aware of the attack until 8 or 12 hours after it occurred. These drugs also leave the body very quickly. Once a victim gets help, there might be no proof that drugs were involved in the attack. But there are some signs that you might have been drugged:

- You feel drunk and haven't drunk any alcohol — or, you feel like the effects of drinking alcohol are stronger than usual.
- You wake up feeling very hung over and disoriented or having no memory of a period of time.
- You remember having a drink, but cannot recall anything after that.
- You find that your clothes are torn or not on right.
- You feel like you had sex, but you cannot remember it.

Q: What should I do if I think I've been drugged and raped?

- A:**
- Get medical care right away. Call 911 or have a trusted friend take you to a hospital emergency room. Don't urinate, douche, bathe, brush your teeth, wash your hands, change clothes, or eat or drink before you go. These things may give evidence of the rape. The hospital will use a "rape kit" to collect evidence.
 - Call the police from the hospital. Tell the police exactly what you remember. Be honest about all your activities. Remember, nothing you did — including drinking alcohol or doing drugs — can justify rape.
 - Ask the hospital to take a urine (pee) sample that can be used to test for date rape drugs. The drugs leave your system quickly. Rohypnol stays in the body for several hours, and can be detected in the urine up to 72 hours after taking it. GHB leaves the body in 12 hours. Don't urinate before going to the hospital.
 - Don't pick up or clean up where you think the assault might have occurred. There could be evidence left behind — such as on a drinking glass or bed sheets.
 - Get counseling and treatment. Feelings of shame, guilt, fear, and shock are normal. A counselor can help you work through these emotions and begin the healing process. Calling a crisis center or a hotline is a good place to start. One national hotline is the **National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE.** ■



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

For more information...

For more information on date rape drugs, please call womenshealth.gov at 1-800-994-9662 or contact the following organizations:

**Drug Enforcement Administration,
DOJ**

Phone: (202) 307-1000
Internet Address:
<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea>

**Office of National Drug Control
Policy**

Phone: (800) 666-3332 (Information
Clearinghouse)
Internet Address:
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>

**Food and Drug Administration,
OPHS, HHS**

Phone: (800) 332-4010 Hotline or (888)
463-6332 (Consumer Information)
Internet Address: <http://www.fda.gov>

Men Can Stop Rape

Phone: (202) 265-6530
Internet Address:
<http://www.mencanstoprape.org>

**National Institute on Drug Abuse,
NIH, HHS**

Phone: (800) 662-4357 Hotline or (800)
662-9832 Spanish Language Hotline
Internet Address:
<http://www.drugabuse.gov/>

National Center for Victims of Crime

Phone: (800) 394-2255
Internet Address: [http://www.ncvc.org/
ncvc](http://www.ncvc.org/ncvc)

**Rape, Abuse, and Incest National
Network**

Phone: (800) 656-4673 (656-HOPE)
Internet Address: <http://www.rainn.org>

All material contained in this FAQ is free of copyright restrictions, and may be copied, reproduced, or duplicated without permission of the Office on Women's Health in the Department of Health and Human Services. Citation of the source is appreciated.

This FAQ was reviewed by:

Susan Weiss
Chief, Science Policy Branch
National Institute on Drug Abuse

Content last updated December 5, 2008.