



Date rape drugs

Date rape drugs are any type of drug used to make rape or sexual assault easier. Alcohol is often used this way. Drugs or alcohol can make a person confused about what is happening, less able to defend themselves against unwanted sexual contact, or unable to remember what happened. If you've been assaulted, it is never your fault.

Q: What are the most common date rape drugs?

A: People who use date rape drugs or alcohol to commit sexual assault most often use alcohol alone or in combination with other drugs.

Someone could use any type of drug, including marijuana, cocaine, or prescription or over-the-counter drugs such as antidepressants, tranquilizers, or sleeping aids to overpower a victim or make them not remember an assault. Other date rape drugs include flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), gamma-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), and ketamine.

Q: What do date rape drugs look like?

A: Some date rape drugs look like regular drinks or other drugs you may be used to seeing. Drugs such as Rohypnol, GHB, GBL, and ketamine may look like pills, liquid, or powders. Often date rape drugs have no color, no smell, and no taste when added to a drink or food.

Some date rape drugs may change the color of a clear drink or make your drink look cloudy. But changes can be hard to see if the drink is dark (such as cola or beer) or if the room is dark.

Q: How do date rape drugs and alcohol affect the body?

A: Date rape drugs are powerful and can affect you very quickly. The effect depends on how much of the drug is in your body and if the drug is mixed with other drugs or alcohol. Alcohol can make the effects of drugs even stronger and can cause serious health problems — even death.

Date rape drugs or too much alcohol can make you:

- Dizzy
- Have problems talking or slurred speech
- Have trouble moving or controlling your muscles
- Feel nauseous or vomit
- Have a very slow or very fast heartbeat
- Sleepy
- Confused
- Have trouble breathing
- Pass out

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

A: Date rape drugs can affect your memory. This can make it difficult to tell whether you were drugged and raped. You might not be aware of an attack until many hours later, or you might not remember what happened.

You might have been drugged and raped if:

- You don't know why your clothes are on wrong, are torn, or have unusual stains. Or you wake up without clothes and don't remember taking them off.
- Your body feels like you had sex, but you cannot remember it.
- You have unexpected bruises, bleeding, pain, scrapes, or cuts, especially after waking up after a party, date, or other social event.



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. Even though it may be difficult, try not to urinate, douche, bathe, shower, wash your hands, brush your teeth or hair, change clothes, or eat or drink before you go. A doctor or nurse may be able to collect evidence of the assault from your body. Tell a doctor or nurse that you might have been drugged so they can test for the right drugs.

Q: What steps can I take to be safer in social situations?

A: Anyone can take steps to be as safe as possible around others:

- Be aware of drinks in punchbowls or other containers that can be easily “spiked.”

- Don't accept drinks from other people. Watch your drink as it is poured and carry it yourself.
- Open your drink yourself. Keep control of it at all times.
- Don't drink anything that smells strange. Stop drinking any drink that tastes strange.
- Don't drink more than you want to just because someone else wants you to or so that they will like you or be impressed.
- Get help right away if you feel drunk and haven't had any alcohol or if you feel like the effects of drinking alcohol are stronger than usual.
- Look out for your friends and ask them to look out for you. If a friend seems out of it, seems much too drunk for the amount of alcohol she drank, is acting out of character, or seems too drunk to stay safe in general, get her to a safe place. Ask your friends to do the same for you.

For more information...

For more information about date rape drugs, call the OWH Helpline at 1-800-994-9662 or contact the following organizations:

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), DOJ
202-307-1000 • www.dea.gov

Food and Drug Administration (FDA), HHS
1-888-INFO-FDA (463-6332) • www.fda.gov

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), NIH, HHS
301-443-1124 • www.drugabuse.gov

Center for Changing Our Campus Culture
www.changingourcampus.org

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network
1-800-656-4673 • www.rainn.org

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