

Date Rape Drugs

The use of "date rape drugs" to facilitate sexual assault is increasingly being reported in some parts of the United States—Illinois included. In most cases, the method of operation is the same—the illicit substance is added to the drink of an intended victim without the person's knowledge. In some cases, eye droppers containing the liquid have been used for ease in administration.

Shortly after the drug-spiked beverage is ingested, the person passes out. Victims usually wake up with no ill effects beyond amnesia covering the period of time they were out. Consequently, she/he neither resists nor remembers the sexual assault, let alone who did it. As indicated, both men and women may be the victims of date rape drugs, or simply rape drugs.

These drugs can be detected in blood tests providing the blood is drawn within the first four hours after ingestion. In most cases, however, this time has lapsed before the victim awakes. It is recommended urine tests be conducted. GHB can be detected for only eight to ten hours while detection of Rohypnol can occur for 60 hours following ingestion.

The following three drugs, in addition to alcohol and marijuana, are the most common in cases of substance-related sexual assaults today. Aside from the purpose of intended sexual assault, these three substances are used/abused recreationally to extend the effects of heroin and diminish the after-effects of crack cocaine. In cases of overdose, these drugs may result in coma or even death.

In addition to the following, be aware that there are a wide variety of other drugs which are chemically similar and mimic the effect of these drugs.

GHB (Gamma Hydroxybutyrate)

Available by prescription in Europe and North Africa, GHB was originally conceived as a preoperative anesthetic and a sleep aid. The Food and Drug Administration in 1990 ruled the drug had no legal use. It has since been banned by the FDA and is illegal in the United States.

GHB, sometimes referred to as "Fantasy," is classified as a Schedule I controlled substance in Illinois. Possession of the drug is against the law.

A central nervous system depressant known to cause profound sedation, GHB can be found as both a white powder and a colorless, odorless liquid. Without color and odor, the somewhat syrupy concoction is often undetectable when mixed into drinks and is being misused to involuntarily sedate individuals for sexual assault. Currently, GHB is showing up on Illinois college campuses, in dance clubs, and the "rave" scene.

A GHB-spiked drink can cause the victim to pass out for two to three hours. As a result of the drug, the victim's inhibitions are lowered and their desires and libidos are raised. Low doses lead to a feeling of euphoria and increased social activity, followed by drowsiness and sleep. Afterward, there is no memory. Within eight to ten hours the drug disappears from the bloodstream. With a sexual-assault victim unable to recall the event and without actual physical evidence proving the existence of GHB, these rapes are difficult to prosecute.

GHB is reported to have effects similar to PCP. Victims who have been dosed with GHB, especially when combined with alcohol, begin feeling quite intoxicated within five to fifteen minutes. Side effects of the substance include nausea, delusions, impaired judgment, reduced inhibition and impaired memory—quite a combination for a victim with someone desirous of taking advantage of them.

Other reported health risks of GHB include dizziness, tremors, and seizures. Overdoses of GHB can cause short-term disruption in brain chemistry, delirium, decreased heart rate, gagging, respiratory failure requiring emergency intubation, and death. GHB and Rohypnol combined and in conjunction with alcohol can very easily cause death.

Ketamine

Ketamine, along with GHB, is another of the "club" or "rave" drugs being used recreationally among many young people. Nicknamed "Special K" or "cat," Ketamine is reportedly accessible

at about any college in the country. Aside from recreational drug abuse, this Schedule III substance is being used for the purpose of rendering victims unable to resist sexual assault.

Ketamine comes in three forms: liquid, powder, or capsule. It is either injected, inhaled, or mixed with a drink. Its effects are reportedly similar to PCP. Persons dosed with Ketamine can become confused and agitated as well as violent and combative. Ketamine stops users from feeling pain, and this could lead to injuries to unwitting victims of the drug.

General use indicators characteristic of a person under the influence of Ketamine are as follows:

Perspiring	Warm to the touch
Blank stare	Speech difficulty
Incomplete verbal responses	Repetitive speech
Increased pain threshold	Confused/agitated
Hallucinations	Possibly violent/combative
Chemical odor	Moon walking/large bouncing steps

Rohypnol

Rohypnol is considered the original date rape drug and is currently termed the "date-rape drug-of-choice." Offenders are using the drug on individuals and raping them while they sleep. This drug is neither produced nor prescribed in the United States. Importation has been banned as well. Despite these facts, it has been reported most often in Texas and Florida and recently in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Illinois. Rohypnol is relatively inexpensive and can be purchased illegally for \$2 to \$3 per pill.

With a chemical name of flunitrazepam, Rohypnol belongs to the class of drugs called benzodiazepines. It is ten times as powerful as Valium and lasts from eight to twelve hours. The white, dime-sized pill dissolves in beverages and intensifies the effects of alcohol and other drugs. An amnesiac state is produced and can start within ten minutes of ingestion and last up to eight hours. A two-milligram dose in one beer can put a person into an excited, agitated, and disinhibited state, leaving only amnesia.

On the street, Rohypnol is known by various names: "roofies," "ruffies," "rope," "roopies," "the forget pill," "roach," and "rape." It is said to produce a high similar to that of a strong Quaalude and may cause partial paralysis of the limbs.

Be aware that the manufacturer, which produces the drug for legal purchase outside the United States, has announced a reformulation of the powerful sedative Rohypnol which will turn clear liquids blue and some dark liquids cloudy, thereby alerting unsuspecting people. Additionally, a film coating has been added to the small tablets, which are difficult to crush into a powder, so they now take up to 40 minutes to dissolve.

Other Date Rape Drugs Include:

Revitrol	Gamma-Butyrolactone (GBL)	Renewtrient
Revivarant	Blue Nitro	Vitality
GH Revitalizer	Gamma G	RemForce
Midazolam	Scopolamine	Burundanga