

Alcohol & Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault

Drug-facilitated sexual assault is defined as an assault wherein an offender uses an anesthetic-type drug that renders the victim physically incapacitated or helpless and unable to consent to sexual activity. In some situations a person willingly ingests drugs or alcohol and the offender takes advantage of a victim's diminished state of mind. In other situations victims are unwittingly administered drugs.

Any substance that renders a person incapable of giving consent to sexual activity or asserting oneself and your needs can be used to commit rape. This can include substances such as: alcohol, prescription drugs, street drugs like marijuana, designer or club drugs like ecstasy, GHB, Rohypnol, over-the-counter sleeping pills and antihistamines, or even cold medications.

Alcohol:

Alcohol remains the substance most frequently associated with facilitating rape, and the most easily accessible sedating substance. When consumed in large amounts alcohol can have tremendous sedating effects. There are several factors to how alcohol will affect an individual: weight, height, if food was consumed before alcohol, mixing various types of alcohol, and tolerance.

Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault:

In addition to alcohol the drugs often implicated in the commission of drug facilitated sexual assaults are GHB, Rohypnol, and Ketamine along with a host of prescription medication ranging from muscle relaxers and sleep to aids antihistamines and even veterinary anesthetics. Specific information about "Roofies", GHB and other drugs are available at the UNA Women's Center, and Rape Response

SIGNS THAT YOU MAY HAVE BEEN DRUGGED INCLUDE:

Effects of these drugs are unpredictable, however they are especially dangerous when combined with alcohol or other depressants. Such combinations can result in permanent memory loss, irregular and depressed respiration, loss of consciousness and death. The taking of any drug affects people differently. Depending on size, weight, health, dosage and other drugs or alcohol being used, the reaction can be mild or very severe. Reactions include:

- Drowsiness, confusion, impaired motor skills, dizziness and/or unconsciousness
- Vomiting (up to 24 hour after administration of the drug)
- Ability to see and or hear people and events, but unable to speak or move in response
- Brief periods of memory loss or impaired memory is especially common when ingested with alcohol
- Loss of inhibitions or impaired judgment
- Feeling a lot more intoxicated than your usual response to the amount of alcohol consumed or feeling intoxicated after drinking a non-alcoholic beverage
- Feeling "hung-over"-if had been drinking the night before more severe, intense headaches, lasts for a couple days

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS AND CHOICES

Important considerations:

- Traces of drugs such as GHB, Rohypnol, and Ketamine usually leave the body within 72 hours of ingestion and are not found in any routine toxicology screen or blood test - survivor should request a screen specifically for drugs
- Many of these drugs are nearly tasteless (or have a slight salty flavor), odorless and colorless and are easily masked by the flavor of an alcoholic beverage
- You can explore “safe partying tips” with a Rape Response advocate

Choices you have if you feel you have been drugged:

If you suspect that you have been given a drug, you can:

- Get to a safe place immediately and ask a trusted friend to stay with you and assist you as you get the help you need
- Go to a hospital emergency room immediately for examination and evidence collection. These drugs, when combined with alcohol can be fatal for some people. Request a toxicology screen specifically for drugs. Testing may be successful up to 48 hours after administration. However many drugs leave your system within the first 12 hours.
- It is important to tell hospital staff that you do not know what you were given and request the type of drug screen that includes “date rape” drugs
- The drugs can be found in your system if you act quickly – generally they will stay in your system for 2 – 4 hours, and possibly longer depending on the drug
- If possible let staff know where you were when you were drugged, such as what bar or concert
- If you suspect that you have been raped while drugged, you may choose to request a preliminary forensic exam with testing for “date rape” drugs.
- Call Rape Response (24 hour crisis line: 256.767.1100) for advocacy, information and resources
- Call the **UNA POLICE DEPARTMENT** at **911** or **256.765.4357**. Use of these drugs in this context is a serious crime and evidence must be gathered as soon as possible if you wish to make a criminal report.

No matter what happens or what the situation is - an assault is never your fault - the person at fault is the person who chooses to use violence.



UNA POLICE DEPARTMENT
256.765.4357