

Facts about sexual assault

- Under Colorado law, Sexual Assault is an act of sexual penetration or intrusion without a person's consent including vaginal, oral or anal penetration by any body part or object.² Fondling and touching without consent are considered Unlawful Sexual Contact³ that is, knowingly touching intimate body parts (clothed or unclothed) without consent, or coerced touching of the perpetrator's body parts for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification.
- Consent cannot be given if a person is drunk, unconscious, asleep, frightened, or otherwise unable to indicate a willingness to participate, regardless of a prior relationship.
- Sexual assault is not uncommon. In Colorado, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 17 men have experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault.⁴
- Most sexual assaults are committed by someone the person knows.⁵
- On college campuses, sexual assault involves the use of alcohol or drugs 90% of the time.⁶
- Sexual assault and unlawful sexual contact are never the victim's fault. Having your guard down does not give another person permission to hurt you. No matter what the circumstances, it is the perpetrator who is responsible for the crime, not the victim.

For more information about sexual assault, contact your local center:

What to do if you suspect you've been drugged & sexually assaulted

Trust yourself

It is hard to know what to do about something when you can't fully remember what happened. Trust what your instincts are telling you and seek help.

Get medical attention

If you are ill or injured, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room for treatment. Tell the medical provider that you suspect you may have been raped while under the influence. Whether or not you are ill or physically injured, consider getting medical attention from your healthcare provider, local clinic or hospital. Medical care should include testing for pregnancy and preventive treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.

Contact law enforcement

If you choose to report the incident to law enforcement, do not delay. Call the police and then go to the hospital to have the medical exam. If a report is filed, law enforcement will pay for the medical exam⁷ and you may be eligible for victim's compensation which covers counseling.⁸

Preserve evidence

Don't shower, douche, change clothes, or brush your teeth. Try not to urinate until medical/legal evidence is collected at the hospital. Your urine can be tested for the presence of sedating drugs. Some drugs, like GHB, can only be detected in the urine for about 12 hours, while others can be detected up to 72 hours. The sooner you get to the hospital, the more likely the drug will be found in your system.

Get emotional support and help

There are agencies specializing in sexual assault services in most communities. To be connected with a 24-hour confidential sexual assault hotline near you, call 1-800-656-HOPE.

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Footnotes:

- 1 Colorado Revised Statutes, 18-13-123 (3): Unlawful use of GHB and ketamine.
- 2 Colorado Revised Statutes, 18-3-402: Sexual assault.
- 3 Colorado Revised Statutes, 18-3-404: Unlawful sexual contact.
- 4 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment & Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 1998.
- 5 Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice, 1997.
- 6 National Collegiate Date and Acquaintance Rape Statistics, 1996.
- 7 Colorado Revised Statutes, 18-3-407.5 (1): Costs associated with the collection of forensic evidence.
- 8 Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-4.1: Crime Victim Rights.

WHAT HAPPENED?
DRUG-FACILITATED
SEXUAL ASSAULT
("Date rape drugs")



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Introduction

Alcohol is the number one “drug” associated with the crime of sexual assault. It is sometimes used to “loosen-up” a date, acquaintance or even a friend to make them submit to sexual advances. Besides alcohol, there are other drugs that can make someone vulnerable to a sexual assault. These drugs may be slipped into a beverage or used recreationally. As a result, the person’s judgment and/or memory may be impaired, causing them to ask, “What happened?”



What are “date rape drugs?”

Certain drugs can incapacitate a person for a period of time and cause memory loss. These drugs may be colorless and odorless; their taste is easily masked. They may be in liquid form or dissolve easily in liquid. After ingestion, effects can occur immediately or within 15 to 30 minutes. The drugs described here are often called “date rape drugs” because they quickly increase a person’s vulnerability to sexual assault.

What if I used a “date rape drug” recreationally?

Some people choose to experiment with “date rape drugs.” However, consenting to taking drugs does not mean you consented to have sex. Even though we all have responsibility for our behavior, we are not responsible for a crime that someone else commits.

Commonly used drugs and their effects

- **GHB (Gamma Hydroxybutyrate):** Found in clear liquid or white powder form. The liquid has a slightly salty taste. It causes intense drowsiness, disorientation, seizures, sexually aggressive behavior, nausea/vomiting, unconsciousness, and coma. Other names: Grievous Bodily Harm, Liquid Ecstasy, Easy Lay, Great Hormones, Somatmax, G-rifick, Georgia Homeboy, Ever Clear, Scoop, Cherry Meth, Great Hormones at Bedtime, Gamma 10.
- **GBL (Gamma Butyrolactone):** A clear liquid with a slightly salty taste. Colorant may have been added. It causes the same symptoms as GHB. Other names: Renuitient, Revivariant, Blue-Nitro, Rest-Eze, Invigorate, Miracle Organic Cleaner.
- **1,4 Butanediol:** Used in liquid form, it causes the same symptoms as GHB. Other names: FX, Kava-Kava.
- **Ketamine (Ketamine Hydrochloride):** A controlled substance used as a liquid veterinary anesthetic; the street form may be liquid or powder. It produces vivid hallucinations, paranoia, impulsive behavior, sensory distortions, muscle rigidity, and loss of pain perception. Other names: Blind Squid, Cat Valium, Special K, Vitamin K, Kit Kat, Ket.
- **Rohypnol (Flunitrazepam):** Found as a small white pill with ROCHE imprinted on one side or as a dark green, elongated pill that causes light colored drinks to turn blue. Similar to, but 10 times stronger than Valium, it causes difficulty in speaking or movement, visual disturbances, excitability, aggressive behavior, decrease in blood pressure and breathing, and amnesia. Other names: Roofies, Rope, Roche, the Forget Pill, Mexican Valium, Basta, R2, Run-Trip-Fall, Stupefi.

Emotional effects

Guilt, confusion, depression, fear, anxiety, denial, helplessness and betrayal are common reactions to sexual violence.

Victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault often have additional concerns that compound the trauma including (but not limited to):

- Partial or complete memory loss.
- Memories of being helpless to stop the assault.
- Anger, guilt or shame, a sense of helplessness, and tremendous anxiety about the unknowns.
- Self-blame or self-doubt stemming from fear that their choices allowed someone to hurt them.

All of these things can make drug facilitated sexual assault very hard to come to terms with emotionally. Counseling and support can reduce long-term emotional effects. Finding a counselor who specializes in sexual assault issues may significantly help with healing.

Things to note

- Perpetrators of sexual assault tend to manipulate, coerce and/or isolate a potential victim.
- People who target someone to assault frequently use alcohol and drugs as part of their plan.
- People who use drugs to facilitate sexual assault may work in pairs. One person might place the drug in someone’s drink, while the second person arrives as the drug is taking effect.
- Many times perpetrators, victims, friends and loved ones minimize the impact of the crime because alcohol and/or drugs were involved.
- Using drugs to facilitate sexual assault increases the penalty for the crime.¹

How to reduce your risk of drug facilitated sexual assault

Trust your instincts

If a situation feels unsafe it probably is. Tell a trusted friend and get to a safe place immediately.

Surround yourself with people you trust

Go out with friends you trust and use a buddy system. If a friend appears more inebriated than they should be for the amount of alcohol consumed, seek medical help.

Safety logistics

- Do not leave beverages unattended.
- Do not take any beverages, including alcohol, from someone you do not know well and trust.
- Accept drinks only from the bartender or wait staff at a bar or club.
- Do not accept open container drinks from anyone at parties.
- Be alert to the behavior of friends. Anyone appearing too intoxicated for the amount of alcohol consumed may be in danger.
- If there is reason to believe that someone has consumed a sedative-like substance, take them to a hospital emergency room or call 911. Try to keep a sample of the beverage for analysis.

Taking precautions may reduce your risk but does not guarantee safety. Remember, you are never to blame for a crime committed against your will.