

DATE RAPE DRUGS

Often found at nightclubs and rave parties, Rohypnol and GHB are two strong sedatives that are abused by teenagers, nightclub attendees, and individuals intent on sexual assault.

What is Rohypnol?

Rohypnol (flunitrazepam) is a strong sedative, which is manufactured by Hoffman-La Roche. A member of the benzodiazepine family, which includes drugs such as Rivotril, Librium, Xanax, and Valium, Rohypnol is approximately ten times the strength of Valium. Typically, Rohypnol is smuggled into Texas from Mexican pharmacies. Any of the drugs in the benzodiazepene family may also be used during a sexual assault.

What are Rohypnol's effects?

The user may feel intoxicated, then sleepy. Users may exhibit slurred speech, impaired judgment, and difficulty walking. Rohypnol can cause deep sedation, black outs that can last up to 24 hours, and amnesia where users forget events experienced while under its influence.



What is GHB?

GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate) was once sold in health food stores as a performance enhancing additive to body building formulas. In 1990, the FDA banned the use of GHB except under the supervision of a physician because of many reports of severe, uncontrollable side effects, although it has recently been approved to treat symptoms of narcolepsy. Most GHB obtained in the U.S. is homemade, with recipes obtained from the internet. GHB is a central nervous system depressant that is abused for its intoxicating effects.

What are GHB's effects?

GHB produces intoxication followed by deep sedation. GHB can cause nausea, respiratory arrest, vomiting, delusions, depression, vertigo, visual disturbances, seizures, loss of consciousness, amnesia and coma. When combined with alcohol and other drugs, the potential for deadly overdoses escalates rapidly.

Rohypnol and GHB have been called “sexual assault” drugs because of their potential to cause blackouts and amnesia. There have been cases reported across Texas of sexual assault, including gang rape, where victims were sedated with Rohypnol or GHB. The Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act of 1996 allows for the addition of up to 20 years on to a sentence when the offender drugs the victim with the intent to commit a sexual assault.

There are many other drugs that can be considered “date rape drugs,” such as Ketamine and MDMA (Ecstasy) that are often used in conjunction with alcohol or other drugs.