



SAFEGUARDING

OUR BI-MONTHLY SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

MARCH APRIL 2022 • DRINK SPIKING & DATE RAPE DRUGS



WHAT'S INSIDE?

In our latest issue we will be covering drink spiking and date rape drugs.

If you require further support please see the links on the last page of the document.

WHAT IS SPIKING?

To spike a drink means to put alcohol or drugs into someone's drink without their knowledge or permission. Public perception is that 'spiking' is limited to slipping drugs into an alcoholic drink, however, drink spiking can include:

- Putting alcohol into a non-alcoholic drink (such as water, soft drink, non-alcoholic punch or fruit juice).
- Adding extra alcohol to an alcoholic drink.
- Slipping prescription or illegal drugs (such as benzodiazepines, amphetamines or GHB) into an alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink.

A person's drink can be spiked to make them more vulnerable for a variety of motives. The most common reasons are:

- to carry out a sexual assault or rape
- to carry out a physical assault
- to carry out a theft
- for amusement

So-called '**date rape drugs**' may be used to spike a drink before a sexual assault. They are the most common drugs used to spike drinks. Date rape drugs can come in powder or liquid form. They may not have an unusual taste or smell.





DATE RAPE DRUGS

Date rape drugs are substances that make it easier for someone to sexually assault or take advantage of another person. Date rape drugs slow down your nervous system & dull your responses, making it harder for you to resist an assault. Some 'date rape' drugs can be legally prescribed for anxiety & insomnia, however when taken without knowing these drugs will leave you vulnerable to danger.

These drugs will affect your behaviour, causing you to lose control of yourself and make you a more vulnerable target.

The drugs most commonly being used are tranquilisers such as Rohyphnol and Valium, Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB) and Ketamine.

Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB)

GHB usually comes in the form of a slightly oily, colourless liquid. It also comes, less often, as a powder.

Only a very small amount of GHB is needed to have an effect. It can be dissolved easily into other liquids. GHB has an unpleasant taste and a weak odour. But, you are unlikely to notice it in very small doses or when it is mixed with a strong-flavoured drink.

Dr Sameer Sanghvi, clinical technology lead at LloydsPharmacy Online Doctor told SWLondon that "GHB can give you a sense of euphoria, reduce your inhibitions and also cause sleepiness"

Tranquillizers

Tranquillizers come in hundreds of different forms. The most common are called benzodiazepines. They normally come as a tablet.

You may hear of these as:

- valium
- rohypnol
- roofies
- benzos

They are sometimes legally prescribed to treat anxiety or insomnia. Tranquillizers work by slowing down your body. They relieve tension and making you feel very relaxed.

Dr Sameer Sanghvi, stated that "Rohyphnol works by increasing the effect of gamma amino butyric acid (GABA) in the brain which can strongly affect a person's rational thought process and short-term memory."

Ketamine

Ketamine, sometimes called K, is a powerful anaesthetic. It is used for both animals and humans. It's a liquid in its legal form. Illegally, it is normally a grainy white powder or a tablet.

WHO IS AT RISK OF DRINK SPIKING?

Women are more likely to have their drinks spiked than men. However Drink spiking does not only target females. Anyone can be targeted.

Studies show that most people are not aware of the dangers of drink spiking. For example:

- Many people do not think they are at risk of drink spiking, and do not consider it a common occurrence.
- Drinks can be spiked by people you know or have just met. Such as, you may not consider an unknown person to be a stranger after talking to them for a while – then more likely to accept a drink from them.

HOW TO PREVENT DRINK SPIKING

The following steps may help prevent drink spiking:

- Never leave your drink unattended, and keep an eye on your friends' drinks.
- Do not accept a drink from someone you do not know.
- Consider sticking to bottled drinks and avoiding punch bowls or jugs of cocktails.
- Don't give out your address to someone you have just met.
- If you think your drink's been tampered with, do not drink it – tell a trusted friend or relative immediately.
- Before going out, let someone know where you're going and what time you expect to be home.



SHOCKING STATISTICS

- The true prevalence of drink and needle spiking remains unknown because of inadequate data collection.
- Alcohol Education Trust (AET) said its survey of 747 people found that 94 (12.6%) had been spiked. 15% of females and 7% among males. However only 8% of those reported it to the police.
- A separate study of 23000 students from 19 universities showed 11% had been spiked.
- As of 23rd October 21 the NPCC (National Police Chiefs' Council) collected 56 reports of spiking involving a needle in September & October,
- The National Police Chiefs' Council reported 1,032 cases of needle injection between the beginning of September 2021 and the end of December, most of which occurred in October. The peak in incidents coincided with the start of the university year. By 26 January 2022, this figure had risen to 1,382.
- Stamp Out Spiking (SOS) reported that 98% of spiking victims don't report what happened to the police or a medic.

SYMPTOMS OF DRINK SPIKING & DATE RAPE DRUGS

If your drink has been spiked, it's unlikely that you'll see, smell or taste any difference. Some drugs, such as GHB, may taste slightly salty or smell unusual. If you start to feel strange or more drunk than you should be, get help immediately.

Most date rape drugs take effect within 30 minutes, and symptoms usually last for several hours.

Symptoms of drink spiking depend on many factors such as:

- the substance used
- what your drink has been mixed with
- the dose
- your size and weight
- how much alcohol you have already consumed.

If you pass out, it'll be hard to know the full effect. You may still feel some of the symptoms of a date rape drug after a night's sleep.

Although your symptoms will depend on which substance has been used, some common symptoms are:

- lowered inhibitions
- difficulty concentrating or speaking
- loss of balance and finding it hard to move
- visual problems, particularly blurred vision
- memory loss (amnesia) or 'blackouts'
- feeling confused or disorientated, particularly after waking up (if you have been asleep)
- paranoia (a feeling of fear or distrust of others)
- hallucinations (seeing, hearing or touching things that are not there) or having an 'out of body' experience
- nausea and vomiting
- unconsciousness

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR DRINKS BEEN SPIKED?

First, tell someone you completely trust, such as:

- a close friend
- a relative
- a medical professional
- the police

If you are not with anyone, call someone you trust and get to a safe place. Ask to use a phone if yours has been stolen.

If you need urgent help, call 999. Be wary of accepting help from a stranger and do not leave with someone you do not know.

If you feel unwell, someone you trust should take you to your nearest emergency department (ED). Tell the medical staff that you think your drink's been spiked.

Arrange for a trusted friend or relative to take you home and stay with you until the drugs have fully left your system.

Report it to the police as soon as you can. They may ask you to provide blood and urine samples.

Most drugs leave the body within 72 hours of being taken. The date rape drug GHB leaves the body within 12 hours, so it's important to be tested as soon as possible.

If you're abroad, get help from a travel representative or local medical services, or ask a bar or hotel manager to call local police.

If you have been sexually assaulted, you should get medical attention as soon as possible.

You may need tests to determine if you have any sexually transmitted infections (STIs), or if you're pregnant.

REMEMBER, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

INFORMATION FROM: [HTTPS://WWW2.HSE.IE/CONDITIONS/DRINK-SPIKING-DATE-RAPE-DRUGS/](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/drink-spiking-date-rape-drugs/)

FURTHER SUPPORT

STAMP OUT SPIKING

stampoutspiking.org

a not-for-profit with a range of anti-drink spiking products and services. We aim to raise awareness about the scale of the problem by campaigning, educating and providing people with a practical means of protecting themselves.

VS VICTIM SUPPORT

[Victim Support](http://VictimSupport)

If you, or someone you know, have been affected by crime, including sexual harassment or any sort of sexual harm, help and support is available. Victim Support is an independent charity for victims and witnesses of crime. They offer free, confidential help to anyone who's been affected by sexual harassment.

9 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

PREVENT DUTY

The Prevent Duty is part of the government strategy to reduce the risk of Extremism, Terrorism and Radicalisation.

View our Prevent Leaflet

Report possible terrorist activity online If you are concerned about someone or see anything suspicious call the local police or the police anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

BRITISH VALUES

British Values are defined as;

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Contact Steadfast Training's Safeguarding team on 0845 223 2401 or email safe-guarding@steadfasttraining.co.uk

Our Safeguarding Officers

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[Report a Safeguarding Issue](#)



For more information on anything covered in the newsletter, feedback or ideas for the next issue, please contact us on chloe.robinson@steadfasttraining.co.uk.