



*If you need help  
or information  
call the sexual  
Assault Team on  
02 6256 7777*



*Drug Rape.  
Watch yourself,  
Watch your friends.*



GREEN 14949





You see a guy taking an out-of-it girl out of the club. Maybe he's looking after her: maybe he'll take her back to her house and tuck her into bed.

Or maybe not. Maybe she's been drugged. Maybe someone slipped something into her drink without her seeing. Maybe she'll wake up in the morning wondering what happened.

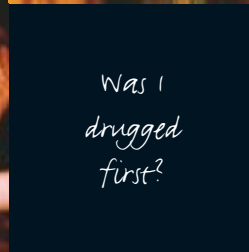
Rohypnol and GHB have both been associated with so-called "date-rape" cases, where women have been drugged and assaulted, waking up the next morning with no memory of what went on. It's terrifying how easily it can happen. Maybe someone buys you a drink: cheers! Or you go to the toilet or the dance floor and lose sight of your drink. It only takes a second to drop in an aspirin-sized pill – and in a noisy club, or at a party, and especially if you've been drinking, you probably wouldn't notice.

This is not one of those urban myths. It happens.

Part of what makes going out fun is leaving behind the restrictions and inhibitions of daily life. You have a few drinks, meet people, fool around. It's fun. But things can go very bad, very fast.

Dissolved in your drink, Rohypnol or GHB can be colourless, tasteless and odourless. It can start to come on in ten minutes and you could be out of it for hours. The effects peak around eight hours after ingestion; by that time you'll probably be unconscious and incapable of defending yourself, or even remembering what happened later. As the drug takes effect, you could feel sleepy, uninhibited, relaxed, and open to suggestion – which makes it that much easier for you to get yourself into a really dangerous situation. So if you start feeling strange, don't hope it'll pass. Get help from a friend, someone you trust. And if you see a friend behaving oddly, help them stay out of trouble.

It sounds like something your mother was told when she was young: watch out for people spiking your drinks. But that's exactly what's going on. Women have been drugged and raped. And they never even knew what was happening.





*How could  
this happen?*

What happened last night? If you've been drugged, you might not even know what happened to you. Maybe there's something wrong with your clothes or your body. But you just can't remember.

First thing: you didn't ask for it. Rape is a crime, and drug-rape is taking advantage of someone's inability to resist. What makes it worse is that you can't really be sure what went on – or if you could have done anything about it.

It's hard to come to terms with something you're not sure even happened, but there are some things you can do, if you need to know, if you want to do something about it – and if you want to try to make sure it doesn't happen again to someone else. Rohypnol and GHB leave your system quickly: a urine test needs to be performed within 24 hours if you want to know if you were drugged. You shouldn't wash yourself or go to the toilet if you want to preserve possible evidence for an examination. Whatever you decide to do, talk to someone – don't keep it bottled up. There's help available.

If you or someone you know thinks they've been drugged and raped, there are people to talk to – for counselling, for support, or to press charges. Call the Rape Crisis Centre on 02 6247 2525, or the Police Sexual Assault Team on 02 6256 7777.

Even if you're not sure what happened, it's worth talking to someone. Keep an eye on your friends too: they might need your help. If they're acting strange or withdrawn, maybe they need to talk about it.

Drug rape is real, and it happens to women in Canberra. If you know about it, it can help you avoid it, and help prevent it from happening again. Talk to your friends. Take care when you go out. Watch your drinks. Never let someone give you an opened drink – especially someone you haven't known long enough to be able to trust completely.

Go out. Have fun. But watch yourself, and watch your friends.

