

IT'S MORE COMMON

than you think:

*drink spiking*

### ***What is drink spiking?***

Drink spiking occurs when someone slips a substance into another person's drink without their knowledge. It can happen to both men and women.

Drink spiking is also used to facilitate sexual assaults because it can cause a person to blackout or lose consciousness, leaving them with little or no memory of what happened.

Drugs used to facilitate sexual assault are widely known as "Date Rape Drugs." Although these drugs are widely available, alcohol is still the most common substance used to facilitate sexual assault.

### ***Which drugs are used?***

A wide range of substances are used to facilitate sexual assault. They can include drugs such as Rohypnol, GHB, and Ketamine. However, more common drugs, like Gravol or anti-depressant/anxiety medications can also be used to spike drinks.

Some of the substances used are colourless, tasteless, and odorless, making them difficult to detect. They can take effect within minutes and they leave the body quickly afterwards. These drugs can be incapacitating and, when combined with alcohol, can have dangerous results such as comas and death.

### ***What are some common side effects?***

- Feeling drowsy, confused, dizzy, and/or nauseous.
- Experiencing a lack of coordination, loss of inhibition, blackouts, memory loss, and hallucinations.
- Feeling more intoxicated than you normally would after drinking a certain amount of alcohol.

**Drink spiking can also occur while drinking non-alcoholic beverages. Always trust how you feel and do what you think is right at the time.**

### ***There is help!***

WAVAW can support you. Our free services include: community referrals, transportation to and from Vancouver General Hospital for the Sexual Assault Support services, 24 hour Crisis Line, One to one counselling, support groups, aboriginal outreach and counselling, and a victim service team to help with legal forms, police reporting, and court support. For more information, contact our office: 604 255 6228 or visit our website at [www.wavaw.ca](http://www.wavaw.ca).



***women against violence against women***

Rape Crisis Centre  
2405 Pine St.  
PO Box 46851 Station D  
Vancouver, BC V6J 5M4

**24hr CRISIS LINE:**  
604 255 6344  
1 877 392 7583

## ***What are my options if I think I have experienced a drug facilitated sexual assault?***

Most drugs used to facilitate sexual assault impair memory, making it very difficult for survivors to come forward. It is important to **always trust how you feel.**

Here are some of the options you can consider:

- Get to a safe place - somewhere you feel safe such as your home or in your friend's company.
- Talk to someone you trust. Let them know you may have been drugged.
- It is okay if you do not want to disclose details of your assault to the people that you are close to. Contacting a support person, such as through WAVAW's Crisis Line, allows you to reach out for support without having to share information that you don't feel ready to disclose.
- If you have concerns for your health you can seek medical attention through the Sexual Assault Support service at Vancouver General Hospital (or phone WAVAW's Crisis Line to find a similar service in your area).
- Report the incident to the police. Reporting to the police can be an overwhelming process. If you are interested in reporting but would like help, WAVAW's Victim Service Program can support you.
- File a third party (anonymous) report at WAVAW or at your local sexual assault centre.

The drugs used are often disorienting, incapacitating and leave the body rapidly. People who feel they have been drugged often cannot prove it and feel unsure about what happened. This is normal and you do not deserve to be judged or penalized for not remembering. If you would like to know whether or not you have been drugged, you can see the Sexual Assault Support team at VGH and receive a toxicology screen.

## ***Supporting each other and remaining aware in a Rape Culture...***

### **When you are out:**

- (1)** Watch out for your friends. Use a buddy-system and leave the party or club together.
- (2)** Don't be afraid to ask for help when tending to a friend who may have been drugged.
- (3)** If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts to tell you what to do.
- (4)** Try not to accept drinks from someone you do not know very well and bring your own drinks to parties. Watch your drink or have someone you trust watch it while you go to the washroom. Never leave your drink unattended.

### **If a friend experiences a drink spiking or sexual assault here are some ways you can support them:**

- (1)** Be non-judgmental.
- (2)** Tell them it wasn't their fault.
- (3)** Respect the decision they make. They are in control.
- (4)** Listen to them.

**Sexual assault is never the survivor's fault. These safety tips can be helpful, but it is not our responsibility to prevent violence against ourselves, no matter where we go or who we go there with. The only person to blame for violence is the perpetrator.**



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