

**FACT
SHEET**

ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

More than twenty different drugs have been associated with drug-facilitated sexual assault. These include illicit, therapeutic and over-the-counter drugs such as sedatives, hypnotics, muscle relaxants and antihistamines.

Alcohol and marijuana are the most commonly encountered substances in cases of sexual assault.

Maryland Rape Recovery Centers can provide information and tips to help identify and minimize the likelihood of drug-facilitated sexual assault. Women who feel unusually intoxicated and suspect that they may have unknowingly ingested a drug should get help quickly. Go to www.mcasa.org for more information.

WARNING SIGNS

- If the victim recalls having a drink but cannot recall what happened for a period of time after consuming the drink
- If the victim suspects that sexual contact has taken place but cannot remember any or all of the incident
- If the victim feels more intoxicated than their usual response to the same amount of alcohol
- If the victim wakes up feeling hung over and experiences a memory lapse or can't account for periods of time

PREVENTION TIPS

- Don't drink from a punchbowl or from a container that is being passed around
- If someone offers you a drink, watch the drink being poured and carry the drink yourself
- Don't drink beverages that you did not open yourself
- Don't share or exchange drinks with anyone
- Don't leave your drink unattended; if you do, pour it out
- Don't drink anything that has an unusual taste or appearance (excess foaming, residue)
- Keep your car keys with you and note the address of the party

Alcohol is the most common date rape drug. In a survey of students' actions in regards to drinking games:

- 35% of men have tried to get someone else drunk during a drinking game in hopes of having sexual intercourse with them later;
- 27% of men have tried to kiss someone who did not want to be kissed after playing a drinking game;
- 24% of men have taken advantage of someone sexually after playing drinking games with them;

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- 23% of men have had sex with someone who was too drunk to give consent after playing drinking games;
- 30% of men have touched someone on the breast or genitals without first getting their consent after playing a drinking game;
- 7% of women have touched someone on the breast or genitals without first getting their consent after playing a drinking game;
- 35% of women felt that someone took advantage of them sexually after playing a drinking game with them;
- 3% of men felt that someone took advantage of them sexually after playing a drinking game with them.

Johnson, Thomas J., and Courtney Stahl. Sexual Experiences Associated With Participation in Drinking Games. Journal of General Psychology, 2004.

Girls who had experienced dating violence were significantly more likely to use alcohol or drugs before intercourse.

Silverman, J.G., Raj, A., and Clements, K. "Dating Violence and Associated Sexual Risk and Pregnancy Among Adolescent Girls in the United States." Pediatrics, 114(2), 2004.

A review of college alcohol study surveys designed to measure students' use of alcohol across 119 college campuses nationwide indicated that 4.7% of the women surveyed reported being raped. 72% of the women reporting being raped, were raped while they were intoxicated. Further findings include:

- Frequent heavy episodic drinkers and illicit drug users were more likely to be raped while intoxicated than non-heavy episodic drinkers and non-drug users.
- Being under-aged, residing in a sorority house, heavy episodic drinking in high school and using illicit drugs remained significant risk factors predicting sexual assault while intoxicated.

Mohler-Kuo, M., Dowdall, G., Koss, M. and Wechsler, H. "Correlates of Rape While Intoxicated in a National Sample." Journal of Alcohol Studies, 65(1), 2004.

In a review of National Crime Victimization study responses, researchers noted that offender alcohol use was a strong predictor of rape completion. Data suggested in cases in which both offenders and victims both had used alcohol were unrelated to rape completion, however when only the offender used alcohol there was a significant correlation with completed rapes.

Brecklin, L.R., Ullman, S.E. "The Roles of Victim and Offender Alcohol Use in Sexual Assaults: Results from the National Violence Against Women Survey." Journal of Studies on Alcohol, (63)1, 2002.

DRUG FACILITATED RAPE:

In a study of cases presenting to a hospital-based sexual assault services center, data indicated that over a seven year period the median number of suspected drug facilitated sexual assaults was 12% of the total number of cases. In 1999, the percentage of cases increased to nearly 23% of all sexual assault cases. 97% of all victims of DFSA cases were female. A comparison between the drug facilitated sexual assault cases and non-drug facilitated sexual assault cases showed that the median time from assault to examination

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to DFSA was 18 hours (compared to 10 hours from non DFSA cases). DFSA victims had the police involvement in 48% of the time (compared to 66% of non-DFSA victims). DFSA victims also presented with a lower occurrence of genital and extra-genital injury compared to non DFSA victims.

McGregor, M.J.; Lipowska, M.; Shah, S. et al. "An Exploratory Analysis of Suspected Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault Seen in a Hospital Emergency Department." Women and Health. 37(3), 2003.

A study to examine the prevalence of club drug use showed that in a review of emergency room records from 1994-2000, the most prevalent club drugs mentioned in the records of cases reporting to the emergency department of hospitals were the following:

- MDMA (Ecstasy) 5,54
- GHB 3,340
- Ketamine 679

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Emergency Department Trends from the Drug Warning Network: Final Estimates (1994-2001). Rockville, 2002.

In a study of perpetrators successfully prosecuted for drug-facilitated sexual assault, the following profile was suggested:

- Majority of perpetrators lived alone
- Less than one-third of them had been in a committed relationship before
- Over 80% of the perpetrators were over the age of 30
- When a co-conspirator is involved, a high number of victims usually results

Weiner, M.. "The Perpetrators and their Modus Operandi" in Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault: A Forensic Handbook, LeBeau, M. & Mozayani, A. Eds. San Diego, Academic Press, 2002.

Compared to non-victims of crime, rape victims were:

- 5.3 times more likely to have used prescription drugs non-medically
- 6.4 times more likely to have used hard drugs
- 3.4 times more likely to have used marijuana

Silverman, Jay, A. Raj, L. Mucci, J. Hathaway. "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality." Journal of the American Medical Association, 286(5), 2001.

A survey of 176 college women indicated that:

- 15% reported having anal or vaginal intercourse when they did not want to because they were unable to consent as a result of incapacitation by drugs or alcohol.
- 37% reported at least one drug or alcohol related sex assault experience.
- 25% reported at least one non-drug or alcohol related sex assault experience.
- 39% reported no sex assault experience.

Marx, B. P., Nichols-Anderson, C., Messman-Moore, T., Miranda, R., and Porter, C., "Alcohol Consumption Outcomes Expectations and Victimization Status Among Female College Students. Journal of Applied Psychology, 30(5), 2000.

Despite public attention on other drugs used to facilitate sexual assault, a random analysis of urine samples collected for evidence in sexual assault cases indicated that the two most frequent detected substances were alcohol and marijuana.

Slaughter, L., "Involvement of Drugs in Sexual Assault." Journal of Reproductive Medicine. 45 (5), 2000.

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