

Lesson: Protecting Against Date Rape

Policy Focus

Should Congress adopt a bill to increase the regulation of rohypnol (a sedative used to drug potential rape victims) as a controlled substance?

Objectives

- Students will assess their knowledge of the threat of date rape drugs.
- Students will learn key facts about three date rape drugs being used today.
- Students will evaluate the effectiveness of including date rape drugs in the list of controlled substances.
- Students will analyze the policy on date rape drugs using the policy analysis framework.

Materials

Date Rape Drug Quiz

Date Rape Drug Facts

Policy Summary: Control of Date Rape Drugs

Time Required

1 class period

Class Activity

Administer the “Date Rape Drug Quiz.” Share answers with the class and allow time for reflection and response. Ask what facts, if any, were new to them.

Separate students into triads. Have them take a few minutes to read “Date Rape Drug Facts” and then discuss the following discussion questions:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you think that date rape drugs pose a real threat to your school, community, state or nation?
- Do you think that date rape is more of a problem than it was 10 years ago? Why or why not?

- Why do people commit rape? Explore the notion of one person trying to exert power over another.
- What are some of the obstacles to developing solutions to the problem of date rape. (Consider lack of information, failure to report rapes, lack of resources, availability of date-rape drugs etc.).

Policy Analysis

Take a few minutes to read the policy summary on “Control of Date Rape Drugs.” Apply the framework to the policy.

Service Projects

- Conduct research into Attorney General Jim Ryan’s information for setting up a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) on college campuses. Adapt the information to create a plan for a SART at your school. Submit your plan to the administration. (Go to the Attorney General’s web site at <http://www.ag.state.il.us> or contact the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, Violence Against Women at 312/814/5846.
- Create a pamphlet for parents or high school students that educates them about date rape drugs and offers strategies for keeping safe. Compile a list of teen relationship resources in your school and community and publicize it in a pamphlet and/or on the Internet.
- Do research on legislation regarding Rolyplol, Ketamine, and Gamma-hydroxybutyrate. Make a chart comparing federal and state law on these drugs. Include a statement of which laws you think are likely to be most effective and why.
- Interview a school or community-based teen counselor to learn what they are doing to prevent date rape your community. Organize a date rape awareness and discussion group. Invite teachers and parents to attend.

Date Rape Drug Quiz

How much do you know about date-rape drugs? Take this true-or-false quiz and find out. Then find out the facts on date-rape drugs and what you can do to stop them.

1. If someone dropped a drug in my drink, the color or smell would alert me.

Correct Answer: False.

The drugs most commonly used to facilitate a sexual assault—GHB, Ketamine and Rohypnol—are odorless and colorless.

2. Once the chemicals are in a person's system, they are detectable in a urine sample, but only for a number of hours.

Correct Answer: True.

Date-rape drugs can be detected in the urine, but they leave the body quickly. If a victim wishes to be tested for the presence of the drugs, s/he must get to a medical facility as soon as possible so a sample can be preserved.

Even if the victim does not wish to be tested for the presence of these drugs, medical treatment should be sought immediately if a date-rape drug may have been ingested. Rohypnol, GHB and Ketamine can cause serious medical problems, especially when combined with alcohol.

3. Due to the victim's memory loss of the details of the rape, there have been no successful prosecutions in Illinois for drug-assisted rape.

Correct Answer: True.

Date-rape drugs have been seized in Illinois, but no cases involving sexual assault facilitated by date-rape drugs have yet resulted in convictions.

4. If I am raped, the campus police at my school will collect the necessary evidence and statement needed for a trial, should I choose later to pursue prosecution.

Correct Answer: False.

Only a few college campuses have sworn officers on their police force. If your school does not have sworn officers, it is important to report a sexual assault immediately to your local police department. They will gather the evidence that can be used later if you choose to pursue criminal or civil charges.

5. It is against the law to have sex with someone who is unable to give knowing consent. This includes someone who is drugged or legally drunk.

Correct Answer: True.

It is sexual assault if the accused knew the victim was unable to understand the nature of the act, or was unable to give knowing consent. If you are unsure of whether someone is legally drunk or unable to give consent, it's best to wait until both of you are sober and can discuss it.

6. Date-rape drugs have been found in water and other non-alcoholic beverages.

Correct Answer: True.

Although rapists often place date-rape drugs in alcoholic beverages to enhance their effect, the drugs have been found in non-alcoholic beverages as well. Because these drugs have no detectable color or odor, you probably won't be able to tell they're in a drink. The best way to protect yourself is to be vigilant in any public situation and follow these tips.

Keep yourself and your friends safe by doing these simple things:

- Never leave your drink unattended.
- Don't accept open-container drinks from anyone but a bartender or server.
- Attend parties or bars with a group of friends, arranging beforehand to watch each other's drinks. If you arrive as a group, leave as a group.
- Watch out for your friends. If a friend shows symptoms of date-rape drug ingestion, seek medical attention immediately.

Signs to look for include: Dizziness and/or nausea, memory loss, breathing or motion difficulties, and acting disproportionately intoxicated relative to the amount of alcohol consumed.

7. Possession of GHB is a felony in Illinois.

Correct Answer: True.

In Illinois, knowingly possessing GHB is a Class 4 felony, punishable by 1 to 3 years in prison and a fine. Stronger penalties are imposed for manufacturing, delivering or possessing with intent to deliver, with penalties ranging from 2 to 30 years in prison and a fine.

8. Hospitals will automatically test for drugs when they use the sexual assault evidence collection kit.

Correct Answer: False.

The victim must ask for the test. It is not part of the standard evidence collection procedure. The sample must be sent to the State Police for analysis. The victim must sign a consent form to have the sample analyzed.

9. If my friend appears to be drunk and is leaving the party with someone they've just met, it's none of my business. They know what their doing.

Correct Answer: False.

If your friend appears more intoxicated than they should for the amount of alcohol they have had, they may have been drugged. Do not let them leave the bar or party without you or another trusted friend. Seek medical attention immediately for them.

To stay safe while going to parties, follow this general rule:
If you attended the party as a group, make sure you leave as a group.

10. The Illinois Campus Security Act requires all colleges and universities to have a community task force that will provide a coordinated response to reports of sexual assault.

Correct Answer: True.

Attorney General Jim Ryan has information to help Illinois colleges and universities implement this task force and select a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). Find out how your high school addresses this problem. Does your school have a Task Force? Does your school have a system in place to deal with date rape/sexual assault?. Details on the SART and the Illinois Campus Security Act are covered in *Averting the Campus Date Rape Drug Crisis: Seven Solutions for Colleges, Law Enforcement and Medical Professionals*.

Thank you for taking the quiz. Now that you know the facts about date-rape drugs, share your knowledge with your friends.

From: Illinois Attorney General Ryan's Web Site www.ag.state.il.us

Date Rape Drug Facts

To prevent yourself and your friends from becoming victims of date-rape drug, you need to know what you're up against. While many sedatives have been used as date-rape drugs, GHB, Ketamine, and Rohypnol are the ones you're most likely to encounter.

GHB

Short for gamma-hydroxybutyrate, GHB is most often administered to victims as a clear liquid with a salty taste, but can also be found in capsule and powder forms.

GHB can cause intoxication followed by deep sedation, lasting up to 8 hours. Victims may experience reduced inhibitions, nausea, convulsions, amnesia and loss of consciousness. Mixed with alcohol, GHB can cause the central nervous system to shut down, resulting in respiratory distress, coma or even death. The effects can take place within 15 minutes.

Due to its potential calming and euphoric effects, GHB has become popular at clubs and raves. It has also been promoted as a muscle-builder, but its effectiveness has never been proven.

Chemical names for GHB: Gamma-hydroxybutyrate; gamma-hydroxy-butylamine; gamma hydroxybutyric acid.

Street names for GHB include: Grievous Bodily Harm, Liquid G, Somatomax, Cherry Meth, Easy Lay and Gamma 10.

Law: It is illegal to manufacture, deliver or possess GHB in Illinois.

KETAMINE

Administered in liquid, tablet and powder form, Ketamine is a fast-acting general anesthetic often used by veterinarians.

Ketamine is a fast-acting general anesthetic used in both humans and animals. Like GHB, it is found frequently at clubs and raves, where users take it for its purported euphoric effects. Ketamine can cause impaired judgment, paranoia, numbness, amnesia, convulsions and respiratory depression. Large doses can lead to oxygen starvation to the brain and muscles. Its effects typically last for an hour, but it is not uncommon for the effects of Ketamine to last for 4-6 hours. Generally, users do not recover completely from the drug for up to 48 hours.

Brand names for Ketamine: Ketaset, Vetalar.

Street names for Ketamine include: Special K, Ket, K, Vitamin K, Kit Kat, Keller, Cat Valium, Purple and Super C.

Law: It is a felony to manufacture, deliver or possess Ketamine in Illinois

Date Rape Drug Facts, continued

ROHYPNOL

Often dropped into beverages in tablet form, Rohypnol is a potent and fast-acting sedative that dissolves rapidly, leaving no detectable taste, color or odor.

Rohypnol is a sedative similar to Valium, but with ten times the strength. It is used as a sleeping pill in some countries, but has never been approved for use in the United States. Rohypnol can cause impaired judgment, disinhibition, dizziness, motion difficulty, respiratory depression and amnesia. The drug takes effect in 15 to 60 minutes.

Chemical name for Rohypnol: Flunitrazepam.

Manufacturer: Hoffman-LaRoche.

Street names for Rohypnol include: Roofies, Roach, R-2, Mind Erasers and Roche'. To be under the influence of Rohypnol is to be "roached."

Law: It is a felony to manufacture, deliver or possess Rohypnol in Illinois.

Source: Illinois Attorney General Jim Ryan's web site at <http://www.ag.state.il.us>.

Policy Summary: Control of Date Rape Drugs

A New Federal Bill

An approach for preventing date rape violence has been to toughen laws regulating date rape drugs. Under federal law, dangerous drugs are regulated as “controlled substances.” Controlled substances are categorized under five “Schedules”; the lower the schedule, the tougher the law.

Currently, Rohypnol is listed under Schedule IV, which includes drugs with the following characteristics:

- a lower potential for abuse than other controlled substances;
- an acceptable medical use in treatment in the U.S.;
- abuse of the drug may lead to limited physical dependence or psychological dependence.

“The Violence Against Women Act II,” H.R. 357 (Conyers)/S.51 (Biden), introduced January 19, 1999, contains a provision to toughen the classification of rohypnol as a controlled substance. Specifically, Section 104, entitled “Control of Date-Rape Drug” reclassifies flunitrazepan (another name for Rohypnol) from schedule IV of the Controlled Substances Act to Schedule I.

The new bill would reclassify Rohypnol to a Schedule I, which includes drugs with the following characteristics:

- a high potential for abuse;
- no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the U.S.
- a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug under medical supervision.

Some drugs currently classified under Schedule I include heroine, marijuana, PCP, and LSD.

The Federal Bill can be read in its entirety at <http://www.thomas.loc.gov>

Pros, Cons and Questions

Should Congress adopt a bill to increase the regulation of rohypnol (a date rape drug) as a controlled substance?

PROS:

- Misuse and abuse of rohypnol is on the rise; this legislation would curb its use.
- Rescheduling rohypnol makes the drug more difficult to obtain.
- Raises public awareness about drug-induced date rape.
- Will lead to greater penalties when use of rohypnol in date rape is proven.

CONS:

- A local, not a federal issue.
- Few cases of rohypnol-induced date rape have been prosecuted; this is merely a tempest in a teapot.
- Has little or no effect on victims of date rape.
- Does not address underlying problem of date rape.

QUESTIONS:

- What are the goals of this policy?
- Will the policy reach its goals?
- How might this policy be improved?
- What experiences or other evidence do you have to support your views?