

Keeping safe from drug rape

Drugged sexual assault has happened to males, females and children in New Zealand. There are some things you can do to keep safe from drug rape including:

- Take your own drinks to parties and drink out of bottles (it's harder to slip something into a bottle than a glass)
- Go out with a group of friends and stay together.
- Never leave drinks unattended.
- Tell someone you trust where you're going and who you're going with, especially if you're not with your usual crowd.
- If you are going to use recreational drugs, make sure you only get drugs off someone you trust. Always know what you are taking.
- Make a safety plan before you go out. Your plan could include what to do if someone in your group wants to go off with another person, how to get home in an emergency, what to do if someone in your group thinks they have been drugged, how to keep an eye on your drink, and how to make sure that you are not separated from the group.

How can I find out more?

Rape Prevention Education provides free information, resources and support. We operate a referral service which is culturally appropriate, safe and supportive. You can call us on 360-4001 during office hours or email info@rapecrisis.org.nz to find out more about your options.

www.rapecrisis.org.nz

DRUG RAPE



Rape Prevention Education

RAPE CRISIS AUCKLAND INCORPORATED
WHAKATU MAURI

*Supporting survivors of sexual violence & their whanau.
Working to eliminate rape and sexual abuse through
education and community work.*

Drug Rape

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What is drug rape?

Drug rape is when someone takes away your ability to give consent to sex by giving you drugs without your knowing, and then has sex with you.

According to New Zealand law, it is illegal to drug another person ('Disabling' - Section 197 Crimes Act).

It is also against the law in New Zealand to have sex with another person without consent ('Sexual Violation' - Section 128 Crimes Act).

How does it happen?

The types of drugs used in cases in New Zealand include prescription tranquilizers, sedatives and antihistamines. Alcohol is the most common vehicle for drug rape when it is given to you without your consent or knowledge.

Drugging most commonly happens when someone puts one of these drugs in your drink without you knowing about it. There have also been cases reported where the victim has been injected with a drug or one of these drugs has been mixed with a recreational drug (like ecstasy) in order to disable someone.

In most cases, the person who has been drugged knows the person who did it beforehand. Often, the offender is a friend or acquaintance.

Different drugs have different effects. The time it takes for a drug to take effect also varies. Drugs that are injected into the bloodstream or inhaled take effect almost immediately, while a drug which has been slipped into a drink may take 10-30 minutes to take full effect. If the drug has been put into an alcoholic drink the effect of the drug may be different or stronger than usual.

How would I know if it happened to me?

Some drugs that are used to incapacitate have a slightly bitter taste. However, this bitterness may be masked by the taste of the drink they've been slipped into, or the drug may have no taste at all. The first indication that you've been drugged without your knowledge is thus likely to be a change in your behaviour.

Once the drug takes effect you might appear to others to be really drunk (even if you haven't had that much alcohol). Some of the drugs can make you feel dizzy and out of control. Some drugs also induce a 'blackout' where you may not remember much. During this blackout you may still be moving around and talking but may not be fully aware of what's happening.

While some people wake up after being drugged feeling dizzy and disorientated, others feel clear-headed and refreshed. This is due to the effect that each different drug has.

People who are drug raped might wake up naked or have sore or tender genitals. This may be the only indication that they have had sex.

Retrograde amnesia (not remembering a period of time that has passed) is a common symptom of many of the drugs that are used in drug rape.

Sex without consent is a crime.

You cannot give consent to sex if you've been drugged.

What can I do if it happens to me?

If you feel unwell or can't remember a period of time, even if you don't know exactly what's happened, it's important to get help as soon as possible.

Some survivors of drug rape feel like they can't tell anyone about what happened because they may not remember much themselves.

Even if you don't remember everything about what happened there are people who may be able to help.

Recovery and support

Rape Prevention Education and other sexual assault agencies can offer support and information. They can discuss with you your options for support, reporting to the Police, and medical check-ups.

The Police can arrange for blood and urine tests to detect the presence of stupefying drugs up to 48 hours after you have regained consciousness. The results of these tests can be used as evidence in a rape case to prove that informed consent was not given.

Doctors for Sexual Abuse Care (DSAC) can make sure that you are physically OK. These doctors can work with the police to collect physical evidence which may be used if your case goes to court. Contact Rape Prevention Education for the phone number of your nearest DSAC doctor.