

## Myths and Facts about Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault

You wake up in a strange bed. Your head is pounding, your muscles ache, and you have no memory of the night before. The last thing you remember is heading to a party with some friends - everything after that is gone. Then, a memory fires in your mind. You're not sure, but you think you've been drugged and sexually assaulted.

This scenario is what most people think of when they think of drug-facilitated sexual assault – a woman being assaulted after having “date-rape” drugs such as Rohypnol® (“Roofies”) slipped into her drink. In reality, this only represents a small piece of the bigger picture of this terrible crime. To help get the record straight, here are some myths, facts and tips from

[www.sexualityandu.ca](http://www.sexualityandu.ca):



**Myth:** A person has to be drugged to become a victim of drug-facilitated sexual assault

**Fact:** Though these crimes are usually depicted this way on TV or movies, drug-facilitated sexual assault is more often committed by an offender who targets an intoxicated victim.

**Myth:** These crimes are always committed with “date-rape” drugs

**Fact:** The most common drug involved in drug-facilitated sexual assault is not Rohypnol® - it's alcohol. An offender may assault an intoxicated woman who does not give her consent, or take advantage of a woman after she has blacked out. He may also pressure her to drink heavily or mix her drinks extra strong.

**Myth:** If a woman is sexually assaulted after she gets really drunk, it's partly her fault because she was asking for it.

**Fact:** Only one person is responsible for sexual assault – the person who commits it. Being intoxicated - through alcohol or any other drug - is NEVER an invitation for sex.

**Myth:** Only teenaged girls are victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault.

**Fact:** Statistically, women between 16 and 24 are at highest risk of being sexually assaulted; however, anyone can become a victim of drug-facilitated sexual assault, regardless of age, sexual orientation, and even gender.

**Myth:** These crimes are always committed by strangers

**Fact:** Most sexual assaults are committed by friends or acquaintances of the victim.

**Myth:** Drug-facilitated sexual assaults are very uncommon.

**Fact:** About twenty-five percent of women report that drugs were a factor in a rape. However, because drug-facilitated sexual assault is a highly underreported crime, no one can say for sure just how often it happens.

It is never a victim's responsibility to prevent an assault, but the following tips can help you have a safe and fun time when at a bar, a party, or just out with friends.

- If you plan to get intoxicated, be aware of your surroundings and the people you're with. If you feel the need to sleep or feel you may pass out, consider asking a trusted and sober friend for a ride home.
- Avoid leaving your drink unattended, and if your drink ever tastes, looks or smells strange, don't drink it.
- Use a buddy system if you go out with your friends; keep an eye on them and have them keep an eye on you.
- If you suspect you may have been drugged, particularly if you feel “way too intoxicated” or extremely drowsy, get help immediately.