

# I WAS RAPED WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Call Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter anytime. We take emergency calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

**Telephone: (604) 872-8212**

WE RESPECT EVERY WOMAN'S  
RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY.

- Get information if you're dealing with the police, court and/or hospital. Phone for an appointment to come in and find out what we know. Let us accompany you to the hospital, to the police, through court proceedings, appointments with lawyers etc, for emotional support & advocacy.
- Join our Support, Education & Action Group - meet with other women who have experienced sexist violence. Sharing emotional support and knowledge helps us all join together to act for change.
  - Tuesdays 6:00-8.30pm.
  - Free Childcare

**VANCOUVER RAPE  
RELIEF &  
WOMEN'S SHELTER**

**Tel: (604) 872-8212**

E-mail: [wgacj02@web.net](mailto:wgacj02@web.net)  
[www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca](http://www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca)

ART WORK BY: Dover Publications

# RAPE DRUGS



**THEY'RE NOTHING  
NEW!**

**A Feminist Guide to Rape Drugs  
by VANCOUVER RAPE RELIEF  
& WOMEN'S SHELTER**

## DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE!

Rohypnol & GHB are only the latest drugs men rape with. Attention focuses on Rohypnol, but rapists continue to use: Alcohol, prescription medication, marijuana, cocaine, heroin etc. to access & incapacitate women as victims.

Women are bombarded with warnings to modify their behaviour to stay safe from Rohypnol but the number of women calling our rape crisis line to report the use of drugs or alcohol as a factor in rape remains constant at about one-quarter of the reports we receive each year.

## WHAT ARE DATE RAPE DRUGS?

- Date rape drugs are any drug used by a rapist to facilitate rape. The media invented the term "date rape". Hype focuses on GHB, Rohypnol and ketamine.
- Rohypnol is a sleeping pill. It emerged in '93 it quickly became associated with night clubs, parties, and raves. It's cheap, plentiful, highly addictive, and widely utilized by heroin and cocaine users as a secondary drug.
- Recent reformulation of Rohypnol makes it salty & it doesn't dissolve completely. Older versions of the drug are still circulating, which are odorless, colorless and tasteless.
- Used in combination with other drugs & alcohol they are debilitating. Many women report amnesia as a primary effect. These drugs metabolize quickly and are often not traceable after only 24 hours.

For more detailed information call Rape Relief  
Tel: 872-8212 or your local rape crisis centre.

## STOP BLAMING WOMEN

Most information on rape stresses what women should do to avoid rape. Lists of "do's & don'ts" reinforce the myth that if women restrict their behavior they will cease to be targets for rape. New warnings about date rape drugs say women must not only limit their alcohol intake, they must never leave their drinks unattended. They should mix their own drinks, & where they can't it is preferable to watch the bartender etc. Directions to avoid rape place the responsibility for preventing rape on women, while letting rapists off the hook.

## THE RAPIST IS RESPONSIBLE

Whether or not a man uses rape drugs to incapacitate the woman he intends to rape, he is the one responsible. Holding fast to this idea, women break free of woman-hating myths about rape, & the possibility of a response beyond the individual woman emerges. It becomes possible to move the spotlight off women's behaviour & to focus on men instead. It becomes possible to move the spotlight off Rohypnol & to focus on rape instead.

## WE BELIEVE WOMEN

Rape Crisis workers believe women when they speak out about rape. We know that women have nothing to gain by lying about being raped. Despite the decades of feminist work to disprove rape myths, woman-hating informs most public & private discussions about rape. Sexist proscriptions of proper behaviour for women persist so that judgements can be made about which class of women we are - true victim or deserving participant. Were we merely at the wrong place at the wrong time or did we ask for it? If we also experience memory loss, no matter the cause, our judgements may be considered suspect by others. This is not acceptable.

## MEDICAL EVIDENCE

In Canada, Rohypnol has not appeared in the few blood & urine samples from raped women screened by forensic labs. Most samples are taken after the drug metabolizes. Often, the samples are not screened for other drugs. Hoffman-LaRoche, the manufacturer of Rohypnol, recently funded a drug-screening program in the US. The results of this program showed that Rohypnol was found in less than 3% of the samples taken. Police often use this lack of medical evidence as an excuse to not investigate. As with most rape cases the onus remains on women to prove they were raped before the police proceed with charges. Vancouver Rape Relief works with women to insist the police investigate rape cases. We advocate for the police to gather other evidence take statements, interview witnesses, and examine evidence where the attack happened.

## WOMEN KNOW THE MEN WHO RAPE US

Most rapists are average men. They are our lovers and husbands, fathers and brothers, friends and co-workers, bosses and teachers. We can't tell whether a man is a rapist or not because they are ordinary and have normal lives. Most rapes are planned in advance. Men who rape find ways to get us in a situation where they can rape us and get away with it, using drugs is just one of the ways rapists make us vulnerable.

## IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT

Power is access to resources, people and influence to do or affect what you want. Men as individuals and as a group hold varying degrees of physical, economic and political power over women. The rape is an enactment of this unequal power relationship. Men choose to rape us because they can.