



Rohypnol tablets are white and are single- or cross-scored on one side with "ROCHE" and "1" or "2" encircled on the other.

Internet photos

DATE RAPE DRUGS

Often we assume that these kinds of drugs are only available in "other countries" or that these drugs are not something that will affect the people in small communities. . The "rape drug" that is most prevalent has a number of different names. You will hear Rohypnol, Roachies, La Roche, Rope, R2, Roche, Rophies, Roofies, Ruffies, or Rib but the generic name is Flunitrazepam. Flunitrazepam a benzodiazepine (tranquilizer) similar to Valium but 10 times more potent.

This drug is illegal in the United States and Canada but is used in other parts of the world for short-term treatment of sleep disorders. It has been illegally sold in the United States since the early 1990's and is therefore probably being sold in Canada as well.

The drug is packaged like cold tablets with foil on the back and plastic on the front making it easy to confuse with a legal prescribed drug. It comes as a round, white pill slightly smaller than an aspirin and is odorless, tasteless, and colorless. The "rape drug" is easily slipped into an unsuspecting victims drink and within 20 - 30 minutes this person will feel ill and dizzy at which time they will become sedated. The drug basically acts as a muscle relaxant and creates a state of amnesia (lack of memory) with slowing of psychomotor performance and a complete blackout for up to 8 hours. When the victim awakes they have no memory of anything prior to the blackout and are unable to account for the past 8 hours.

Rohypnol is popular among young people because it is fairly inexpensive \$2.00-\$3.00/2 mg tab and is often found at high school, college campuses, college fraternities or bars. Although lately the media have been advertising the dangers of this "rape drug" it is also used as a street drug to create a rapid and dramatic high when combined with alcohol, marijuana or cocaine. In combination with other drugs this pill has left users in a coma or dead. It is physically addicting and withdrawal begins with headaches, muscle pain and confusion leading to hallucinations & convulsions.

This drug is something that people should be aware and cautious of because you could be charged with illegal consumption or possession, you could become addicted, you could be taken advantage of or you could die.

There are some common sense things you can do to protect yourself from ingesting such a drug:

- 1) Never leave your drink unattended at a bar
- 2) If you're drinking at home, know the people you invite into your home

- 3) Never let someone else buy you a drink
- 4) Watch the bartender the entire time your drink is being prepared
- 5) In case Rohypnol is slipped into your drink, discuss with your friends if you feel sick so they can help you get home safely. Do not try to go home alone or with someone you don't know really well.

Did you know?

*This drug may cause a person to appear extremely intoxicated (drunk) with slurred speech, no coordination, swaying and blood-shot eyes.

*This drug is commonly added to punch and other drinks at frat parties, bars, college events.

*In the event of rape, this drug is hard to detect because it flushes out of the body within 24 hours therefore making it difficult to prove ingestion if the time limit has exceeded.

*Presently there is only one East Coast lab that tests for Rohypnol making it difficult to prove even if the victim does realize this is what has happened to them.

*There is another drug called GHB that also has a hypnotic effect and makes people lose their inhibitions. These victims are unable to remember what happened but they **are** conscious and **don't** want to stop doing whatever they are doing because the drug leaves them unable to fight off their desires.

*You can not be too careful or cautious when you are drinking. Today you almost have to be paranoid with your drink in order to protect yourself.

Resources:

Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness Addiction Services Department

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the Student Health Centre at 364-2163.