

Drug Facts: Rohypnol®



What Is Rohypnol®?

Rohypnol® is a commonly known brand name for the substance flunitrazepam. It is a central nervous system depressant classified as a benzodiazepine. This medication produces sedative and muscle-relaxant effects. It also produces similar effects to GHB (Gamma-Hydroxybutyric acid).

Rohypnol® is not approved for use or sale in the United States. Outside of the U.S., it is commonly prescribed to treat insomnia. In the United States, it is primarily known for being used to facilitate targeted sexual assault.

What Are Common Street Names?

Roofies, Circles, Forget-me-pill, La Rocha, Mexican Valium, R2, Roach, Ropies, and Wolfies.

What Does It Look Like?

The original form of Rohypnol® was a white, circular tablet. This tablet, when dissolved in liquid, was colorless, odorless and tasteless.

However, due to concerns about the substance's role in sexual assault cases, it was redesigned. It is now a green, oval shaped pill with a blue core. When dissolved in light liquids, it turns the fluid blue.

It is important to know that generic versions of the drug may not include these dyes and may appear like the original formulation.

- Rohypnol® is a green, oval shaped pill with a blue core to be detectable in liquid. However, off-brand flunitrazepam may not contain the dye.
- Rohypnol® is known as a "date rape" drug, due to its sedative effects being used to incapacitate individuals.
- There is no medication to reverse a Rohypnol® overdose. If someone is experiencing an overdose, **call 911**.

How Is It Misused?

The tablets may be swallowed whole or crushed into a powder that is inhaled through the nose or dissolved into drinks. It is commonly used by adolescents and young adults to get the sedative effects of the drug, which may cause them to experience a "high".

Misuse of Rohypnol® is also associated with poly-substance use. Individuals will sometimes combine this substance with stimulants in an attempt to counteract the side effects of the stimulant (e.g., irritation or agitation).

What Is Its Effect On The Mind?

Rohypnol® is a central nervous system depressant, causing:

- Hindered reaction time
- Impaired judgement
- Confusion
- Aggression
- Drowsiness
- Amnesia



Wheeler

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What Is Its Effect On The Body?

Rohypnol® is a muscle relaxant. Physical effects can include:

- Headache
- Slurred speech
- Weakness
- Loss of coordination
- Slowed breathing

Long-term health effects can also include gastrointestinal problems, fluid retention, low blood pressure, and vision problems.

Can Misuse Of Rohypnol® Lead To A Substance Use Disorder?

Yes. Frequent use of Rohypnol® can lead to the body developing physical dependence on the substance.

If an individual were to suddenly stop consuming Rohypnol® after a period of prolonged use, they may experience withdrawal symptoms. These can include:

- Sweating
- Headaches
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Fast heart rate
- Tremors
- Seizures

Is It Possible To Overdose On Rohypnol®?

Yes. High doses, especially when combined with other depressants such as alcohol, can cause severe sedation, unconsciousness, slow heart rate, and reduced breathing which can lead to death.

There is no medication to reverse a Rohypnol® overdose. If someone shows signs of an overdose, **call 911 and get the person to an emergency room** as fast as possible to maintain a steady heart rate and breathing.

Staying Safe From Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault

There are a few ways an individual can protect themselves from drug facilitated sexual assault.

- **Drug Testing Strips:** There are paper strips available that can detect common substances such as ketamine, GHB, and Rohypnol®. They are portable, discreet, easy to use, and available for purchase online.
- **Drink Covers:** Reusable or single use covers can be put over a cup or bottle to prevent spiking. This leaves a smaller opening for an individual to put something in a drink without the potential victim noticing. These are also available for purchase online.
- **Stay Vigilant:** Never leave a drink unattended or accept drinks from other people. If there is any suspicion that someone could have spiked the drink, do not consume it and alert the person making the drinks that spiking is suspected.

Connecticut Resources

CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

www.ct.gov/DMHAS

Drug Free CT

drugfreect.org

24/7 Access Line

1.800.563.4086

2-1-1 of Connecticut

www.211ct.org or call 2-1-1

National Resources

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

www.nida.nih.gov