

# Drink Spiking



**Drink spiking is where alcohol or other drugs, either prescription or illicit, have been added to a drink without the drinker's knowledge or approval. The resulting effects can be deadly. Drink spiking commonly leads to sexual assault or robbery, and at the very least it is very scary. It is unlawful and a serious violation.**

## **What are you going to be reading about?...**

- What drugs are used to spike drinks?
- All sorts of drugs are used to spike drinks
- How to avoid having your drink spiked
- Things to think about before a booking
- How to recognise if your drink has been spiked— how does it feel?
- What to do when you wake up and can move if you have been drink spiked
- What to do the day after your drink is spiked
- Added risk factors when spiked

## **What drugs are used to spike drinks?**

You may be surprised to hear this, but alcohol is the most common substance used to spike drinks.

This happens when someone asks you if you'd like a drink, such as vodka and orange, and instead of giving you one shot of vodka, they put two or more shots in.

In other words, they put extra alcohol into your drink that you're not aware of.

Other drugs commonly used are prescription medications like:

- benzodiazepines (Benzos) / muscle relaxants/ hypnotics like Serapax (Sera's), Valium and Rohypnol (Rohy's or Roofies—the drug most hyped as being used for drink spiking by the media, although this is not true).

Illicit drugs that are used include:

- GHB (Gamma hydroxybutyrate—also known as GBH, G, liquid E, liquid ecstasy, liquid X, salty water, Georgia Home Boy, soap, scoop, organic Quaalude, cherry meth, blue nitro).

## **All sorts of drugs are used to spike drinks**

The most commonly used drug to spike in the heterosexual community is alcohol.

In the sex working community, most people report being spiked with pills and GHB more frequently than alcohol. This is because sex workers are spiked with harsher, faster acting drugs, like GHB and pills, because they watch how much alcohol they consume because they are at work, and there are time limits on how long someone has to knock you out.

It's not as if they can take the time to dose you with alcohol over a few hours if they have a one-hour booking.

Drinks spiked with pills or GHB often have a very salty, bitter or residual flavour you can taste. For this reason, it is important you be VERY careful when drinking Coca Cola, Mojitos and other strong tasting drinks, because these can disguise the taste of many drugs.

It's best to avoid anything but a glass of beer or wine you have seen opened with your own eyes, mixed drinks you have mixed yourself—or watched being mixed—with all the bottles that make up those drinks freshly opened and unsealed in front of you.

**“There are lots of opportunities for your drink or food to be spiked. Be aware of where your client, food and drink is at all times.”**

There are lots of opportunities for a drink to be spiked and it is crucial sex workers know about them and are paranoid when it comes to spiking.

To avoid being spiked the things you should remember include:

1. Never let your drink out of your sight.
2. Take your drink with you if you go to the toilet or any other room.
3. Never drink from a glass you haven't seen come out of a cupboard clean—make sure there is no liquid or powder lining the glass before something is poured in it.
4. Never drink from an open bottle, even if the bottle is still full.
5. Never drink water from a bottle of water unless it comes from a sealed bottle of water or directly from a tap.
6. If you are in a house or hotel room and having a bottle of juice or wine, listen to the safety seal pop—safety seals are now mandatory for a reason.
7. If someone is insistent on you drinking anything, even a glass of water, be suspicious.
8. Have a sip of a drink first and wait 10 – 20 minutes before you drink more if you haven't seen it being poured, didn't see the bottle opened, or you let the drink out of your sight.
9. Be paranoid.
10. Be aware of the drug interactions that may occur if you use more than one drug at once.
11. This means if you are on anti-depressants, know the effect different types of alcohol, and what quantity, will have on you.
12. Don't get too drunk in one booking if you have to do another booking straight away.
13. Do not hesitate to end a booking if you feel any threat or danger at all. If someone is insisting you take cocaine or other drugs and you don't feel safe in refusing or ending the booking, tell them you will wrap it up in a Tally-Ho or tissue and swallow it. Then stick it in your mouth and spit it out as soon as you can. Tell them you need to swallow it because you can't have a runny nose because your security guard will know you are using drugs and give you a hard time. If they want you to take a drug, they will more often than not get it into you one way or another. It is

better to fool them than to have an aggressive stand-off, or have drugs slipped into your drink.

14. Try not to agree to cocktails that your client mixes himself because he may put double the shots of alcohol in to make you drunk.
15. Don't drink alcohol you don't know the strength of. Trying a new cocktail or spirit for the first time in a booking is not a good idea.

### **Things to think about before a booking**

1. Always keep your clothes and bag in one pile in case you need to get out of an escort booking very quickly before you are too intoxicated to move.
2. Always keep your phone up-to-date with ugly mugs to avoid booking these guys.
3. Always have someone call to check on you after a booking.
4. Always tell a friend or security where you are and what time you will be back if escorting. If doing an incall, have a friend to call in and out with.
5. If you're with another worker, watch out for each other and have a designated sober friend you can call who can come and get you if you're in danger.

### **How to recognise if your drink has been spiked — how does it feel?**

You will generally know within 10 – 20 minutes if your drink has been spiked. When the spiking takes effect, you will notice different things depending on what drug has been added. As a general rule however, if you are drinking alcohol and you feel 'different' from how you normally would for the amount of alcohol you have drunk, be concerned. If you are drinking a non-alcoholic substance and start to feel at all intoxicated, be worried. The feeling of intoxication depends on what drug is used. Common side-effects include:

- feeling dizzy
- not being able to walk
- not being able to stand up
- slurred speech or not being able to speak
- feeling nauseous and/or throwing up

- wanting to go and sit in a corner or wanting to curl up in a corner
- feeling high or euphoric
- feeling very sad
- feeling very anxious
- feeling manic
- hypersensitivity—colours seem brighter, noises sound louder or more shrill, things move at a different pace
- muscle spasms
- trouble breathing
- wanting to dance a lot, not being able to sit still
- talking too much
- feeling out of control
- not being able to order your thoughts
- not being able to keep track of time

#### **What to do when you wake up and can move if you have been drink spiked**

- Get out of there as soon as you possibly can.
- Leave some DNA evidence behind that he doesn't see you leave. Pull out some strands of hair and stick them behind or under the bed, drop some hair on the carpet, go puke in the toilet and get some on the floor, leave a stocking behind. Always leave something behind in case you decide to report it to the police. Street-based sex workers always leave hair, spit, blood, etc. in cars if they are raped because the police must act and take sex workers seriously if evidence is found.
- Call a friend or security to come and get you straight away. Even if you cannot speak into the phone, they will begin looking for you and be ready to come and get you and be with you when you can talk again.
- When you get up, try and check that you have all of your belongings and that the client hasn't stolen you money, ID, keys, etc. from your bag.
- Check that you have nothing inserted inside your body that will cause you harm, e.g. used condoms, broken glass. Some guys find it amusing to fuck you with something while you're passed out and it may have broken inside you. Be sure to check for broken glass

and other objects because you don't want to be moving around and causing more damage.

- When the booking is over, you will probably still feel woozy on your feet. If you're escorting and have to walk down a hill and you're wearing stilettos, take them off.
- When you leave, be careful crossing roads. Try to cross at sets of lights and pedestrian crossings because you will probably have trouble judging distances and how fast cars are moving.
- When catching a taxi home, be really careful that the driver doesn't try to take advantage of your intoxicated state. Make sure you are being driven to where you want to go and not out into the bush. Wind down the window and sit in the back passenger seat of the car. Try and sit in the seat that is not directly behind the driver (sitting behind the driver will make you car sick). This also keeps you as far away from the driver as possible and you can easily open the door to throw up if you need to without someone pushing you out of the cab.

#### **What to do the day after your drink is spiked**

- Have a friend with you to cry and get angry with.
- Report it to Respect Inc, forums and other sex workers so that they can pass around the client's phone number, address and description (see the Ugly Mug Report Form).
- Consider reporting it to the Police immediately. Many drugs clear your system very quickly, so it can be hard to test for them if you don't report it immediately.
- Be nice to yourself—you have been violated and it is NOT your fault.
- Consider going to a Sexual Assault Service that we have listed below.

#### **Added risk factors when spiked**

Polydrug use is the largest added risk factor in drink spiking. Polydrug use means taking, or being on, more than one drug at a time. People combine drugs for effect, i.e. to gain a particular feeling.

For example, polydrug use may involve taking anti-depressants, drinking alcohol and using heroin all at the same time. It may involve only using anti-depressants and alcohol at the same time.

- Are you on prescription medication? Antidepressants will enhance the effect of the drug you're spiked with, depending on what pills you are on and what drug is used to spike your drink. If you take depressants like benzos, drink alcohol and then throw GHB into the mix, you may be in trouble. This is because they all suppress the central nervous system, which affects breathing, blood flow and oxygen levels. This means you can slow down to the point where you might stop breathing.
- If you are on anti-depressants and then drink, the alcohol will combine with the antidepressants and may slow you down or make you unable to control your mood, judgment or movement. For this reason, it is especially important to closely monitor how much you are drinking.
- If you are taking illicit drugs, like speed, and someone spikes your Coca Cola with cocaine, this can cause you to overdose, pass out or stop breathing.

**“Drink spiking can have VERY, VERY, VERY serious consequences. Please be careful, please take care of yourself and please don't take shit from clients or the people you're working for. If you are spiked, don't hesitate to call the police and ambulance immediately”.**

### Sexual Assault Services

A sexual assault service or sexual health service is a good port of call if you are spiked because they will be able to check if you have anything inside you, will be able to give you emergency contraception and do an STI screen. These services are very aware of drink spiking, the consequences of it and what needs to be done.

### Family Planning Queensland (FPQ) and Statewide Sexual Assault Help Line

24 Hour Sexual Assault Help Line

1800 010 120

<http://www.fpq.com.au>

### Men Affected by Rape and Sexual Assault (MARS)

Men only support group operating from

Stonewall Medical Centre

07 3857 1222

### Male Sexual Assault (Spiritus)

Offers services specifically designed to assist men who have experienced sexual abuse or sexual assault, their partners, friends, families and service providers. They have a website, face to face and telephone counselling and provide an information and referral service. They are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am – 5pm and Tuesday 9am – 8pm.

07 3435 4358, 1300 114 397

<http://www.livingwell.org.au>

### Gallang Place

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander counselling service providing counselling on issues including sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

Open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm in West End, 07 3844 2283

<http://www.gallangplace.org.au>

### Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre (BRISSC)

Centre against sexual violence, run by women for women that provides information and support for people who have experienced sexual violence and the people who support them. Also has a few fact sheets on their website but you have to pay for them. 07 3391 0004

<http://www.brissc.org.au>

### Rape Crisis Line

Telephone support and referral for men, woman and transgender people

1800 657 501

**Bayside Sexual Assault Service**

07 3488 4222, 07 3488 3558 (outside of 9am – 5pm), Redlands Health Service Centre, Cleveland

**Central Highlands Sexual Assault Service**

07 4982 4358, Emerald

**Central West Sexual Assault Service**

07 4652 5500, Community Health Longreach

**Centre Against Sexual Violence (CASV)**

07 3808 3299, Logan

<http://www.casv.org.au>

**Family Planning Queensland Cairns Sexual Assault Service**

07 4031 3590, Cairns

<http://www.fpq.com.au>

**Gladstone Region Sexual Assault Service**

07 4979 1456, Gladstone

**Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence Inc**

07 5591 1164, Southport

<http://www.stopsexualviolence.com>

**Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS)**

07 3846 5400, West End

<http://www.iwss.org.au>

**Laurel House, Sunshine Cooloola Services Against Sexual Violence**

07 5443 4711, Maroochydore

**Mackay Sexual Assault Service**

07 4968 3919 (business hours), 07 4968 6000 (after hours), Mackay Base Hospital

**Mt Isa Sexual Assault Service**

07 4744 4444, Mt Isa Base Hospital

**Murrungunyah Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corp for Women**

07 3290 4254, Woodridge

**North Queensland Combined Women's Service Inc**

07 4775 7555, Townsville

<http://www.thewomenscentre.org.au>

**Phoenix House Bundaberg Area Sexual Assault Service**

07 4153 4299

<http://www.phoenixhouse.com.au>

**Redcliffe Caboolture Sexual Assault Service**

07 3897 6300, Redcliffe Hospital Caboolture Hospital

**Rockhampton Rape, Incest & Sexual Violence**

Centre 07 4922 6585, Rockhampton

**Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service South West Health Service District**

07 4505 1538, Roma

**Sisters Inside Inc**

07 3844 5066, South Brisbane

<http://www.sistersinside.com.au>

**South Burnett Women's Services**

07 4162 5439, Kingaroy

**Tablelands Sexual Assault Service**

07 4091 4036, Atherton

**Toowoomba Sexual Assault Support Service**

07 4616 6950 (office hours) 07 4616 6000 (after hours), Kobi House, Toowoomba Hospital

**West Moreton Women's Health Acute Sexual Assault Program**

07 3812 0138 (business hours), 07 3202 2766 (after hours), Ipswich

**Whitsunday Sexual Assault Service**

07 4946 2999, Cannonvale

**Wide Bay Sexual Assault Association Inc**

4121 5999, Maryborough

**WWILD Sexual Violence Prevention Service (for women with an intellectual or physical disability)**

07 3262 9877, Woolloowin

<http://www.wwild.org>

**Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre**

07 3843 1823

<http://www.zigzag.org.au>

**Places to go if you need a sexual health check or want to discuss medical issues further**

**Sexual health & HIV clinics**

AIDS Medical Unit Brisbane  
07 3837 5622 (existing client or your partners is, only)  
Bamaga Sexual Health Clinic  
07 4090 4219  
Brisbane Sexual Health Clinic  
07 3837 5611  
Bundaberg Health Clinic (Q Clinic)  
07 4150 2754  
Cairns Sexual Health Clinic (The Dolls House)  
07 4050 6205  
Cape York Health Service District Program  
07 4082 3651  
Gold Coast Sexual Health Service (Miami)  
07 5576 9033  
Ipswich Sexual Health Service (S.H.op101)  
07 3817 2428  
Mackay Sexual Health and Sexual Assault Service  
07 4968 3919  
Mt Isa Sexual Health Services  
07 4744 4805  
Palm Island Sexual Health Service  
07 4752 5100  
Redcliffe/Caboolture Sexual Health and HIV Service  
07 3897 6300  
Rockhampton Sexual Health and HIV Service  
07 4920 5555  
Sunshine Coast – Wide Bay Sexual Health & HIV Service  
07 5470 5244  
Thursday Island – Men’s and Women’s Health

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**Disclaimer:**

All material in this fact sheet is provided for your information only and may not be construed as legal, medical or health advice or instruction.

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**Respect Inc contacts:**

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**Gold Coast**

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07 5564 0929 (fax)

**Cairns Office**

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Cairns City QLD 4870  
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07 4051 0009 (fax)

**Townsville Office**

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