



Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week

Fast Facts on "Club Drugs"

Updated 2008

FACTS ON CLUB DRUGS

- Use of these drugs may lower inhibitions and lead to high-risk sexual behaviour, which can result in the user contracting Hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- The *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* governs *GHB*, *LSD*, and *Rohypnol*. Possession is a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment for up to several years on indictment or upon summary conviction to a fine of up to \$1,000 or 6 months imprisonment, or both, for a first offence.

GHB (Gamma-hydroxybutyrate)

- **Slang Names:** Grievous Bodily Harm, G, Liquid Ecstasy, Liquid X, Goop, Scoop, Blue Nitro
- **Drug Class:** A central nervous system depressant, it can relax or sedate the body.
- **History:** Originally developed as an anaesthetic, it has been used to treat alcohol withdrawal and narcolepsy but side effects were too severe. It is abused for its intoxicating/sedative/euphoriant properties or for its growth hormone-releasing effects.
- **Lower dose effects:** Can include: lowered inhibitions, euphoria, drowsiness, dizziness and amnesia.
- **Higher dose effects:** Can include: Can produce confusion, hallucinations, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, seizures, self-injury, shortness of breath, loss of consciousness and coma.
- **Overdose:** Can occur quickly (within 15 minutes), signs include: Drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, headache, loss of consciousness, loss of reflexes, impaired breathing and coma. Death can occur.
- **Other risks:** Used with alcohol it is even more dangerous, increasing the level of risky behaviour and of central nervous system and respiratory system depression. This drug is colourless, odourless and tasteless and has been used in sexual and physical assaults. Withdrawal symptoms include insomnia, anxiety, tremors and sweating.

LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide)

- **Slang Names:** Acid, Blotter, Boomers, Yellow Sunshines, Cube, Lids, Flats, Domes
- **Drug Class:** Most powerful of known hallucinogens, its effects increase as dosage increases.
- **History:** Produced in 1938 as a potential headache treatment, used by the CIA in the 1950's in experiments on mind control, it was promoted in the 1960's as substance capable of "expanding consciousness". Currently there is no accepted medical use for LSD other than research.
- **Short-term Effects:** Can vary depending amount taken, user's personality, mood, expectations and surroundings. Physical effects can include: dilated pupils; increase in body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure; sweating; loss of appetite; sleeplessness; numbness, weakness, dry mouth and tremors. Perceptual, cognitive and emotional experiences can vary widely; typical effects can include vivid perceptual distortions and changes in perception of time and distance. Hallucinations and mood swings can occur.
- **Long-term Effects:** Can include: Development of physical tolerance and psychological dependency is possible, ongoing speech problems, depression, anxiety or more severe psychological conditions such as: persistent psychosis and Hallucinogen Persisting Perception Disorder (flashbacks).
- **Other Risks:** Some users have very unpleasant reactions, "bad trips", which can include: panic, terrifying hallucinations, acute paranoia, bizarre delusions resulting in extreme behaviour. Accidental deaths have been caused due to confusion.

ROHYPNOL

- **Slang Names:** Roofies, Rophies, Roche, Rope, Forget-me Pill
- **Drug Class:** A potent benzodiazepine with sedative/hypnotic effects, not legally available in Canada.
- **History:** Introduced as tranquilizers as they calm without causing sleep.
- **Effects:** Can include: drowsiness, dizziness, memory loss, relaxation, aggressive behaviour, impaired thinking and motor coordination and lowered inhibitions, slurred speech, as well as decreased respiratory rate, heart rate and blood pressure. Has been known to cause amnesia and blackouts.
- **Other Risks:** This substance is odourless, colourless and tasteless and is easily added to a beverage. It has been implicated in sexual assault cases complicated by the victim's amnesia. Effects are dangerously increased when combined with alcohol other CNS depressants and some over-the-counter medicines. Withdrawal symptoms include headaches, muscle pain, confusion and possible hallucinations.

Sources: *Community Drug Alert: Club Drugs*. National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001; *Straight Facts About Drugs & Drug Abuse*. Health Canada, 2000; *Drugs & Drug Abuse: A Reference Text*. Addiction Research Foundation, 1998; *Fast Facts on Drugs*, AFM, 2004. *2005 Youth Survey*, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, 2001; *AADAC Fact Sheets (website edition)*.