

# Drug- Facilitated Sexual Assault

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**TRIGGER WARNING**

**Sexual Assault**



Every 68 seconds,  
an American is  
sexually assaulted.

Only 25 rapists out  
of every 1,000 will  
end up in prison.

# What is Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault?

- Drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA) - alcohol or drugs are used to compromise an individual's ability to consent.
- “Date Rape Drugs”
- Can happen to anyone, by anyone

*“When I was raped I was 6’4” and 220 lbs. I truly believed that I could go anywhere I wanted and no one would bother me.”*

*-Johnathon, a survivor of drug-facilitated sexual assault and RAINN Speakers Bureau member.*



# Drugs Used in Sexual Assault

## Flunitrazepam (Rohypnol)

Benzodiazepine - CIV

Not approved in the US – used in other countries to treat insomnia

## Gamma-Butyrolactone (GBL)

List I chemical

Precursor chemical for illegal production of GHB

## Ketamine

Schedule III

## Gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid (GHB)

FDA-approved GHB product:

Sodium oxybate, Xyrem®

Approved for treatment of narcolepsy



# Psychological Ramifications



# Emotional Trauma

- Impaired Trauma Memory
- Guilt and Self-Blame
- Extreme powerlessness
- Re-experiencing symptoms







# Perpetrator Motivations

- Predatory mindset
- Sexual Entitlement
- Opportunism



# Legal Ramifications



# Current Legal Framework

- Definitions vary state to state
- In Connecticut
  - DFSA is considered a form of rape and is therefore charged as sexual assault in the first degree.

**Victim  $\geq$  16 years old**

**Victim  $<$  16 years old**

Class B felony  
Up to 40 years'  
imprisonment  
Up to \$15,000 in fines

Class A felony  
Up to 25 years'  
imprisonment  
Up to \$20,000 in fines



# Challenges in Prosecution



- Amnesia
- Lack of physical evidence
- Narrow window for detecting date rape drugs in the victim's system
- Bias against victims who were intoxicated



# Societal Ramifications



# Stigmatization

- Credibility
- Social Isolation
- Victim Blame
  - *"Why didn't you fight it?"*
  - *"Why didn't you leave the situation?"*
  - *"What were you wearing?"*





# Addressing Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault

## CT100 Kit

- Standardized sexual assault kit used in all CT hospitals.
- Retrieving samples including debris, blood, hair, urine, and genital swabs.
- Collected within 120 hours (5 days)

## Train Healthcare Providers

Conduct sexual assault forensic exams and toxicology testing to detect date rape drugs

## CT400 Kit

Urine and blood testing to detect the presence of date rape drugs or other substances.

**Urine:** Collected within 120 hours (5 days)

**Blood:** Collected within 48 hours (2 days)

## Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

- 9 sexual assault crisis programs
- 24-hour toll free confidential hotline
  - Via phone, text, or chat, or at their local center
- Sexual Assault Victim Advocates



**THANK YOU!**

**Questions?**