THE DANGERS OF CLUB DRUGS

WHAT IS A CLUB DRUG?

Club drugs are a general term used to describe a certain kind of drug that first became popular at all-night dance parties called “raves.”

Some ravers claim these drugs make them relax and enjoy the music more intensely.

In reality, club drugs produce a wide range of harmful effects including:
- hallucinations
- paranoia
- amnesia
- coma

NOTHING TO RAVE ABOUT

Club drugs include:
- Ecstasy
- GHB
- Ketamine
- Rohypnol
- LSD
- Methamphetamine
ARE THEY SAFE?

Club drugs are NOT safe!
Since most club drugs are made illegally, it's impossible to know exactly what a pill contains.

Other drugs, like Ketamine and Rohypnol, are manufactured legally according to strict guidelines.

Even so, these drugs were never intended for recreational use.

SPECIAL RISK! If a club drug is used in combination with alcohol, the risk of unexpected side effects and lethal overdose are greatly increased.

WHO MAKES THEM?

Most club drugs are developed in “underground labs.”

However, these places aren’t laboratories at all. They’re bathrooms, garages, abandoned houses or factories.

The people making these drugs aren’t chemists—they’re drug dealers.

The drugs these dealers sell might contain any type of unknown substance—caffeine, heroin, baking soda or drain cleaner!

WHO TAKES THEM?

One out of every 15 high school seniors has tried Ecstasy.

In 2004, more than 11 million people reported that they had used Ecstasy at least once.

In 2004, more than 87,000 teens were given emergency treatment after overdosing on club drugs such as Ecstasy, GHB, LSD and methamphetamine.
CLUB DRUGS AND THE LAW

All club drugs are ILLEGAL!

Possession of a club drug is a felony that can result in a prison sentence of one to three years for first-time offenders.

If a club drug is used in a sexual assault, the prison sentence can be up to 20 years in jail.

SEROTONIN

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter in the human brain that regulates mood, learning, memory, sleep, and pain.

Adequate serotonin levels are essential for a person's emotional stability.

Club drugs like Ecstasy damage the neurons that release serotonin.

Abnormal serotonin levels can lead to depression and memory impairment.

CLUB DRUGS AND THE BRAIN

The brain scan on the left is from a person who has never used Ecstasy or other drugs. It shows many bright red areas of active serotonin sites.

The brain scan on the right is from a frequent Ecstasy user. The dark sections indicate areas where serotonin is gone—even three weeks after using Ecstasy.
**WHAT IS ECSTASY?**

Both a stimulant and a mild hallucinogen, Ecstasy is the most widely used club drug today. The average tablet contains between 60 and 150 mg.

**What it looks like:** Ecstasy usually comes in a tablet that is branded with a familiar logo like the Nike® swoosh, Playboy® bunny or four-leaf clover. It may also be sold as a powder that can be snorted or mixed in a beverage.

**Street names:** MDMA, The Hug Drug, Ecstasy, E, Adam, Bean, M, X, XTC, Clarity, Lover’s Speed

**Chemical name:** 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)

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**ECSTASY AND THE BODY**

These physical effects of Ecstasy can last from three to six hours:

- muscle spasms
- involuntary teeth grinding
- nausea
- blurred vision
- faintness
- rapid heartbeat
- extremely high body temperature (hyperthermia)
- profuse sweating and dehydration

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**ECSTASY AND THE MIND**

Ecstasy users report these initial sensations:

- euphoria
- empathy
- reduced inhibitions

However, users also report these negative feelings, which can persist for weeks after taking the drug:

- anxiety
- depression
- paranoia
WHAT IS GHB?

GHB is an addictive sedative that has been linked to overdoses, date rapes and fatalities. It has not been sold legally in the United States since 1990. It is a federal crime to possess, manufacture or distribute GHB.

**What it looks like:** GHB may appear as a clear liquid, or as a white tablet or capsule. It is colorless, odorless and virtually tasteless—although it may have a slightly salty taste. It is often sold in water bottles, and consumed orally.

**Street names:** Georgia Home Boy, Grievous Bodily Harm, G. Groop, Gamma 10, Scoop, Everclear, Salty Water, Liquid X, Scope, G-irfic, Gamma-Ch, G Juice

**Chemical name:** gamma-hydroxybutyrate

EFFECTS OF GHB

**Physical effects:** GHB is a depressant that sedates the body. At low doses it causes nausea, vomiting, dizziness, confusion, drowsiness and loss of coordination. High doses may result in slowed breathing and heart rate, seizures, unconsciousness, amnesia, coma and even death.

**Psychological effects:** Users of GHB report feeling emotionally numb or disconnected. GHB alters brain chemicals like dopamine and serotonin, which regulate mood and impulse control. GHB is highly addictive. Users may suffer from anxiety, insomnia, delirium or hallucinations.

WHAT IS KETAMINE?

Ketamine is a depressant that causes hallucinations and profound numbness. It is legally used as a general anesthetic in both human and veterinary medical practices.

In recent years, Ketamine has also become popular as an illegal street drug.

**What it looks like:** Ketamine is produced in liquid form, but it can be cooked into a white powder. It is generally inhaled but sometimes sprinkled on tobacco or marijuana and smoked.

**Street names:** Special K, Cat, Ket, Super K, Vitamin K, Cat Valium, Kit Kat, Psychedelic Heroin, Breakfast Cereal

**Chemical name:** ketamine hydrochloride
EFFECTS OF KETAMINE

Physical effects:
At low doses, ketamine causes a floating, dream-like euphoric state. At higher doses, it can cause vomiting, breathing problems, convulsions and coma. The user’s memory and coordination may be affected for days after taking ketamine.

Psychological effects:
Ketamine users describe a “K-hole” as a near-death or out-of-body experience. Other effects include delirium and hallucinations. Ketamine can cause serious psychological addiction as well as problems with memory and learning. Depression and other mental illnesses may result from chronic misuse.

WHAT IS ROHPNOL?

Rohipnol is a powerful, addictive sedative that is illegal in the United States, but continues to be prescribed in other countries. Rohipnol can severely impair a person for up to 12 hours.

What it looks like:
An odorless white pill or powder. It can be swallowed as a pill, dissolved in a drink or crushed and snorted.

A special formula is now available that fizzes and turns blue when dropped into liquid, but most illegal rohypnol is white. In some countries, legal rohypnol is sold as an off-green tablet imprinted with the number 542.

Street names:
Date rape drug, roofies, rooflies, forget-me pill, roche, r-2, roach, rocher, circles, mexican valium

Chemical name:
Flunitrazepam

EFFECTS OF ROHPNOL

Physical effects:
Rohipnol causes drowsiness, slurred speech and difficulty moving or speaking. When combined with alcohol, it can put a user into a coma. Chronic use can result in addiction.

Psychological effects:
Rohipnol is often called the forget-me pill because it causes amnesia in users.

SPECIAL NOTE: Possession of rohypnol—also known as a date rape drug—can result in a prison sentence of three years or more.
Club Drugs Notes

**WHAT IS LSD?**

LSD is a mood-changing hallucinogen that distorts a user’s perception of reality. The effects are unpredictable: they depend on the amount of LSD taken, the surroundings in which the drug is used and the user’s unique personality.

**What it looks like:** May be sold in many forms: capsules, liquid, microdot tablets or in squares of gelatin known as window panes. Liquid LSD is commonly applied to sugar cubes or colored blotter paper. Each perforated piece of blotter paper is called a tab.

**Street names:** Acid, Dose, Hit, Tab, Trip, Yellow Sunshine, Blotter, Cad

**Chemical name:** Lysergic acid diethylamide

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**EFFECTS OF LSD**

**Physical effects:**
LSD can cause numbness, dilated pupils, dry mouth, tremors, fever, weakness, nausea, sweating, lack of appetite and sleeplessness.

**Psychological effects:**
All emotions are exaggerated. Sensations appear to “cross over,” giving the user the feeling of hearing colors and seeing sounds. Hallucinations and mood swings are common, as well as an impaired sense of time and space. Users may experience flashbacks (reurrences of the drug’s effects) for days or even weeks after taking the drug.

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**WHAT IS METHAMPHETAMINE?**

Methamphetamine is an extremely addictive stimulant that causes euphoria, anxiety and a heightened state of agitation.

**What it looks like:** Methamphetamine is a white, odorless, bitter-tasting powder. It can be smoked, snorted, swallowed or injected. The smokeable form is often called ice because its clear crystals resemble frozen water.

**Street names:** Speed, Ice, Meth, Crystal, Crank, Chairs, Glass, Zip, Quartz, White Cross

**Chemical names:** methylamphetamine or dextroamphetamine
EFFECTS OF METH

Physical effects:
Methamphetamine users commonly display signs of extreme agitation, excited speech, decreased appetite and increased physical activity. The body is abnormally "speeded up."

Psychological effects:
Methamphetamine use can alter the brain's chemistry, leading to amnesia, aggression, violence and psychotic behavior. Damaged brain cells do not grow back.

CLUB DRUG DEATHS

Samantha Reid
On a cold January night, 15-year-old Samantha Reid was with friends at a party. She asked for a soda, but what she got was a drink spiked with enough GHB to kill eight men.
Within minutes, she began vomiting and fell into a coma. Samantha died after 16 hours on life support.
The guys who spiked Samantha's drink were sentenced to 5% to 15 years in prison for manslaughter.

CLUB DRUG DEATHS

Morgan Jones
The first time Morgan Jones tried Ecstasy, he ended up in the hospital. He thought that he had gotten a"bad" or impure pill. A few months later, he tried the drug again.
This time it killed him—less than three weeks before his 20th birthday.
His father says, "Morgan died from a relatively low dose of Ecstasy. One person’s recreational dose can be another’s fatal dose. There is no way to find your own limit except to die."
PARTY SMART

Some club drugs are colorless, tasteless and odorless. Don’t put yourself at risk of having your drink spiked.

- If your drink is left unattended, discard it.
- If your drink tastes salty or sour, throw it out.
- Drink only from bottles or cans that you have opened yourself.
- Don’t drink from open containers like a punch bowl or pitcher.
- Use the buddy system with friends. Before a party, discuss what to do if you suspect that someone has spiked your drink.

It is a federal crime to use any controlled substance to aid in a sexual assault.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you suspect that someone is under the influence of a club drug, it’s essential to act quickly. These signs mean that immediate medical attention is needed:

- nausea
- blurred vision
- body appears limp
- lack of facial expression
- falls into a deep sleep
- seems extremely intoxicated after one or two drinks

Call 911 immediately. If you suspect that a person has been drugged without his or her knowledge, ask for a urine sample at the hospital because some drugs (such as GHB) pass from the body within hours.

LEARNING MORE

To learn more about club drugs, check out these websites:

- SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Prevention: http://www.csp.samhsa.gov

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