

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DRUGS: STAYING SAFE

What you can do
for yourself and
your friends

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is any form of sexual activity without your permission. It may include (but is not limited to) kissing, grabbing, fondling and rape (i.e. anal, oral and vaginal sex). Sexual assault is an act of violence and is a crime. Sexual assault is often committed by someone the victim knows, such as a friend or acquaintance.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DRUGS

Alcohol and/or drugs often play a role in sexual assault. This may include intentional drink spiking or knowingly using these substances. This type of assault is called **Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault**.

COMMON DRUGS USED IN SEXUAL ASSAULT

Alcohol is the most common drug used in sexual assault.

When drugs are mixed with alcohol they can make us especially vulnerable. These drugs may be taken for fun, such as marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy, or GHB. They may also be over-the-counter medicines such as cough syrup, or those prescribed by a doctor, such as anti-depressants and tranquilizers.

STAYING SAFE:

Everyone should be free to have fun and be safe.

Sexual assault is about one person having power over another. Preventing sexual assault begins by reminding people that sexual assault is a crime and is not okay. We need to show our support to victims of sexual assault.

Taking care of yourself

Substances can be used to make you drunk or high so that you are vulnerable to sexual assault. Someone who sexually assaults you may buy you a lot of drinks or might put too much alcohol in your drinks. They might slip a drug or medicine into your drink so that you become drunk or high. Others look for someone who is already drunk or high.

Sexual assault isn't predictable, but there are a few things that can help you and your friends stay safe.

Safety tips:

- Party with a buddy.
- Have one friend stay sober.
- Avoid open drinks, like punch. Drink from bottles instead.
- Beware of someone who buys you drinks or gives you drugs.
- If you are taking over-the-counter or prescription medicine or using street drugs, be careful of how much alcohol you drink.
- If you feel very drunk, high or like you are more affected than usual, tell a friend to help you home.

REMEMBER

If you believe you were sexually assaulted when you were drunk or high, it is **not your fault!** It is not okay for someone to have sex with you when you are drunk or high; it is a crime.

If you have been sexually assaulted, there's help:

SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centres of Ontario are available to help women, men and children who believe they have been sexually assaulted.

Staff at the centre can:

- provide crisis counseling and support
- test for drugs
- examine and treat injuries
- offer you medicine to prevent pregnancy
- offer you antibiotics to prevent sexually transmitted infections
- collect forensic evidence
- help you call the police, if you want
- arrange follow-up testing

Find a service near you by visiting: www.sadvtreatmentcentres.net or by calling the Assaulted Women's Helpline: **1.866.863.0511** or **1.866.863.7868** (TTY) or by going to your nearest hospital emergency department.

Supporting your friends

We can all play a role in reducing sexual assault by recognizing and being prepared to change what might be a dangerous situation.

- If a friend is drunk or high, watch out for them and help them get home safely.
- If you see someone in a situation that makes you uncomfortable or worried, ask them if they are okay and if they need help. If you don't feel comfortable intervening, ask someone else, such as a friend or bartender, or call 911.

There are many ways to help your friends after a sexual assault.

- Respect and support a friend who tells you about a sexual assault.
- Help your friend cope with a sexual assault: listen without judgment
- Help your friend find a local sexual assault service (such as a Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre), or a counselor.
- Helping a friend deal with a sexual assault **does not** include: blaming them for what happened or asking for details about what happened.

Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault. But remember, there's always something you can do to help.