

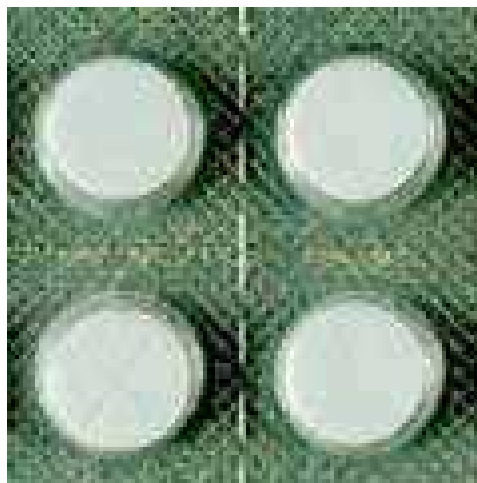


Drug Fact Sheet

Rohypnol

Overview

Rohypnol® is a trade name for flunitrazepam, a central nervous system (CNS) depressant that belongs to a class of drugs known as benzodiazepines. Flunitrazepam is also marketed as generic preparations and other trade name products outside of the United States. Like other benzodiazepines, Rohypnol® produces sedativehypnotic, anti-anxiety, and muscle relaxant effects. This drug has never been approved for medical use in the United States by the Food and Drug Administration. Outside the United States, Rohypnol® is commonly prescribed to treat insomnia. Rohypnol® is also referred to as a “date rape” drug.



Street names

Circles, Forget Pill, Forget-Me-Pill, La Rocha, Lunch Money Drug, Mexican Valium, Pingus, R2, Reynolds, Roach, Roach 2, Roaches, Roachies, Roopies, Robutal, Rochas Dos, Rohypnol, Roofies, Rophies, Ropies, Roples, Row-Shay, Ruffies, Wolfies

Looks like

Prior to 1997, Rohypnol® was manufactured as a white tablet (0.5-2 milligrams per tablet), and when mixed in drinks, was colorless, tasteless, and odorless. In 1997, the manufacturer responded to concerns about the drug's role in sexual assaults by reformulating the drug. Rohypnol® is now manufactured as an oblong olive green tablet with a speckled blue core that when dissolved in light-colored liquids will dye the liquid blue. However, generic versions of the drug may not contain the blue dye.

Methods of abuse

The tablet can be swallowed whole, crushed and snorted, or dissolved in liquid. Adolescents may abuse Rohypnol® to produce a euphoric effect often described as a “high.” While high, they experience reduced inhibitions and impaired judgment. Rohypnol® is also abused in combination with alcohol to produce an exaggerated intoxication. In addition, abuse of Rohypnol® may be associated with multiple-substance abuse. For example, cocaine addicts may use benzodiazepines such as Rohypnol® to relieve the side effects (e.g., irritability and agitation) associated with cocaine binges. Rohypnol® is also misused to physically and psychologically incapacitate women targeted for sexual assault. The drug is usually placed in the alcoholic drink of an unsuspecting victim to incapacitate them and prevent resistance to sexual assault. The drug leaves the victim unaware of what has happened to them.

Affect on mind

Like other benzodiazepines, Rohypnol® slows down the functioning of the CNS producing drowsiness (sedation), sleep (pharmacological hypnosis), decreased anxiety, and amnesia (no memory of events while under the influence of the substance). Rohypnol® can also cause increased or decreased reaction time, impaired mental functioning and judgement, confusion, aggression, and excitability.



Drug Fact Sheet

Rohypnol – cont'd.

Affect on body

Rohypnol® causes muscle relaxation. Adverse physical effects include slurred speech, loss of motor coordination, weakness, headache, and respiratory depression. Rohypnol® also can produce physical dependence when taken regularly over a period of time.

Drugs causing similar effects

Drugs that cause similar effects include GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) and other benzodiazepines such as alprazolam (e.g., Xanax®), clonazepam (e.g., Klonopin®), and diazepam (e.g., Valium®).

Overdose effects

High doses of Rohypnol® particularly when combined with CNS depressant drugs (e.g., alcohol and heroin) can cause severe sedation, unconsciousness, slow heart rate, and suppression of respiration which may be sufficient to result in death.

Legal status in the United States

Rohypnol® is a Schedule IV substance under the Controlled Substance Act. Rohypnol® is not approved for manufacture, sale, use or importation to the United States. It is legally manufactured and marketed in many countries. Penalties for possession, trafficking, and distribution involving one gram or more are the same as those of a Schedule I drug.

Common places of origin

Rohypnol® is smuggled into the United States from other countries, such as Mexico.