

What is Rohypnol?

Rohypnol, a trade name for the drug flunitrazepam, is a central nervous system depressant. The drug is legally manufactured and available outside the United States but is neither manufactured nor approved for sale within the United States. Since the 1990s individuals in the United States have used Rohypnol illegally, often as a means of mitigating the depression that results from using stimulants such as cocaine and methamphetamine. Rohypnol also has been used in the commission of sexual assaults.

What does Rohypnol look like?

Rohypnol is manufactured as a caplet. In 1997 the manufacturer responded to concerns about the drug's role in sexual assaults by reformulating the white, 2-milligram tablets. (The original tablets dissolved clear in liquid, making it nearly impossible for a victim to detect their presence in a beverage.) The new smaller dosage (0.5 mg and 1.0 mg) caplets are dull green with a blue core that, when dissolved in light-colored drinks, will dye the liquid blue. However, the dye may be disguised in blue or dark-colored liquids, and generic versions of the drug may not contain the blue dye.

How is Rohypnol abused?

Individuals who abuse Rohypnol may swallow the caplets whole, crush and then snort the powdered caplets, or dissolve the caplets in liquid and then inject the solution. Sexual predators who administer Rohypnol to their victims typically slip the drug into a drink, often at a bar or party. The blue color that results from mixing Rohypnol with a beverage often is masked by serving blue tropical drinks or by serving the drink in dark or opaque containers.

The effects of the drug typically are felt within 15 to 20 minutes of administration and may persist for more than 12 hours.

Who abuses Rohypnol?

Teenagers and young adults, primarily individuals aged 13 to 30, are the principal users of Rohypnol, and most users are male. The drug is popular on high school and college campuses and at raves and nightclubs.

Rohypnol use among high school students is a particular problem. Nearly 2 percent of high school seniors in the United States used Rohypnol at least once in the past year, according to the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future Survey.

What are the risks?

Individuals who abuse Rohypnol often experience drowsiness, headaches, memory impairment, dizziness, nightmares, confusion, and tremors.

Although the drug is classified as a depressant, Rohypnol can induce aggression or excitability.

In addition to the risks associated with the drug itself, individuals who use Rohypnol may put themselves at risk of sexual assault. While many sexual predators lace unsuspecting victims' drinks with the drug, others offer Rohypnol to victims who consume the drug without understanding the effects it will produce.

Rohypnol users who inject the drug expose themselves to additional risks, including contracting HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), hepatitis B and C, and other blood-borne viruses.

What is it called?

The most common names for Rohypnol are forget-me drug, roche, roofies, and ruffles. (Please see the Street Terms text box for additional names.)

Street Terms for Rohypnol

Circles	Roopies
Forget-me pill	Robutal
Forget pill	Rochas dos
La rocha	Rope
Lunch money drug	Rophies
Mexican valium	Rophy
Pingus	Ropies
R-2	Roples
Reynolds	Row-shay
Roach-2	Ruffies
Roaches	Wolfies
Roachies	

Is Rohypnol illegal in the United States?

Yes, Rohypnol is illegal in the United States. Rohypnol is a Schedule IV substance under the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule IV drugs are considered to have a lower potential for abuse but still can lead to limited physical or psychological dependence. In addition, in 1997 the U.S. Sentencing Commission increased the penalties associated with the possession, trafficking, and distribution of Rohypnol to those of a Schedule I substance. (Schedule I substances include heroin, marijuana, and MDMA.)

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- Marijuana
- MDMA
- Methadone
- Methamphetamine
- OxyContin
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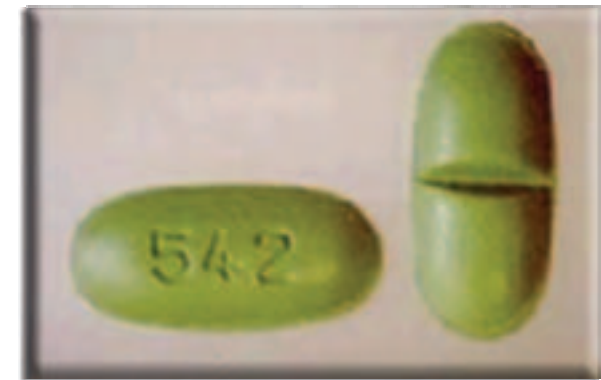
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