

What are GHB and its analogs?

GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate) is a powerful central nervous system depressant that the human body produces in small amounts. A synthetic (man-made) version of GHB was developed in the 1920s as an anesthetic. Individuals abuse synthetic GHB because of its euphoric and sedative effects. Because of its anesthetic properties, GHB also has been used by sexual predators to incapacitate their victims.

GHB analogs, which include GBL, BD, GHV, and GVL, are drugs that possess chemical structures that closely resemble GHB. These analogs produce effects similar to those associated with GHB and are often used in its place.

What do they look like?

GHB and its analogs typically are sold either as a white powder or as a clear liquid. The drugs often have a salty taste.

How are they abused?

GHB and its analogs usually are taken orally. Because of the drugs' salty taste, they often are mixed with a flavored beverage. Sexual predators who administer GHB or an analog to their victims typically slip the drug into a drink, often at a bar or party.

Who uses GHB and its analogs?

Although information about the extent of GHB and analog use in the United States is limited, the data that are available indicate that these drugs primarily are used by young people. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network, individuals aged 18 to 25 account for 58 percent of all GHB mentions in drug-related emergency department visits.

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

What are the risks?

Use of GHB and its analogs can cause nausea, vomiting, delusions, depression, dizziness, hallucinations, seizures, respiratory distress, loss of consciousness, slowed heart rate, lowered blood pressure, amnesia, coma, and death. Mixing GHB or its analogs with alcohol is particularly dangerous because alcohol enhances the drug's depressant effects.

Sustained use of GHB or its analogs can lead to addiction, and chronic users experience withdrawal symptoms when they stop using the drugs. These symptoms include anxiety, insomnia, tremors, tachycardia (abnormally fast

heart rate), delirium, and agitation. Users may experience these symptoms within 1 to 6 hours of their last dose, and the symptoms may persist for months.

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

What are they called?

The most common names for GHB are Georgia home boy, G, goop, grievous bodily harm, and liquid ecstasy. (Please see the Street Terms text box below for additional names.)

Street Terms for GHB and Its Analogs

Cherry meth	Salty water
Fantasy	Scoop
G-riffic	Sleep
Jib	Sleep-500
Liquid E	Soap
Liquid X	Vita-G
Organic quaalude	



Coffeyville (KS) Police Department

Are GHB and its analogs illegal?

Yes, GHB and its analogs are illegal. GHB is a Schedule I substance under the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I drugs, which include heroin and MDMA, have a high potential for abuse and serve no legitimate medical purpose. GHB analogs are treated as Schedule I drugs if they are intended for human consumption.

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