



## Quick Info: Party Drugs, Ecstasy and Hallucinogens

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### **PARTY DRUGS**

The term party (or club) drug refers to a variety of drugs found at dance clubs and house parties. Party/Club drugs are sometimes referred to as “designer drugs”. The substances are typically produced in illegal laboratories, using a variety of chemicals. It is extremely difficult to predict their strength, what their effects will be and whether they contain poisonous ingredients. Therefore these drugs can pose serious risks to young people’s health and safety. Drugs, such as Rohypnol, GHB and Ketamine, have also been called “date rape drugs” because they have been used in situations of sexual assault. People can be sexually assaulted in this way by a stranger as well as someone they know or are “dating”. The victim can be a male or female. Because these drugs are colourless, tasteless and odourless, they can be added to drinks and used to intoxicate or sedate others without their knowledge. When used together, or in combination with alcohol, all of these drugs pose an even greater threat to health and safety.

### **ECSTASY (E, XTC, Adam, Euphoria, “X”, MDM, Love Doves)**

Ecstasy is a recreational drug, most popular among teenagers and young adults, and is often found in environments where alcohol is not permitted. It has certain effects in common with hallucinogens and the party drugs but is related to amphetamines (a stimulant). It is produced in illegal laboratories and can often be contaminated by substances such as caffeine or ephedrine or other toxic drugs. It is usually taken by mouth in capsules or tablets, which are often stamped with a logo, making them look like candy. It may also be a powder that is sniffed. There have been deaths which have been attributed to the use of ecstasy.

### **ROHYPNOL (rophies, ruffies, roofies)**

Rohypnol is the manufacturer’s trade name for a drug that belongs to the same family of sedative drugs that includes drugs such as Valium (trade name). It is not approved for use in Canada or the USA. The person may experience lack of memory, impaired judgment, dizziness, and periods of blackout. Sedation begins in about 30 minutes, peaks within 2 hours and lasts for about 8 hours.

### **KETAMINE (Special K, baby food)**

Ketamine is also a drug that is available at clubs and raves and has been reported in cases of sexual assault. It is a relative of PCP and has been used as an anesthetic in medical and veterinary practice. The drug is found in the form of capsules, powder, crystals and solutions. Effects include temporary amnesia and hallucinations which may be intense or terrifying, dizziness, numbness, and blurred vision. The person may feel sleepy, withdrawn, or confused. They may experience “disassociation”, feeling as though the mind is separated from the body.

### **GHB** (Liquid Ecstasy, Liquid X)

GHB, (gamma hydroxy butyrate) has surfaced as a drug at clubs and rave parties and also has been found in cases of sexual assault. It is an illegally manufactured drug mostly prepared as an odourless and tasteless liquid. It is quickly absorbed in the body and peaks in 20-60 minutes. At low doses, the person may feel sociable and less inhibited. With a slightly higher dose the person may experience dizziness, nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, amnesia and vertigo. At higher doses, the person may experience loss of consciousness, seizures, depressed breathing and coma.

### **HALLUCINOGENS**

The term “hallucinogens” refers to a class of drugs that have the effect of changing the user’s perception of reality. These drugs can make people hear or see things that aren’t really there (“hallucinate”), change the way they feel time is passing, distort colours and sounds, and make people feel their minds are separated from their bodies. A person using these drugs may find these feelings pleasant and exciting or threatening and disturbing, sometimes resulting in panic and depression, injuries or even accidental deaths. Other effects include numbness, weakened muscles and nausea. The response can vary each time.

### **PSYLOCYBIN/MUSHROOMS** (magic mushrooms, shrooms, shroomies)

This drug usually comes in a form of dried mushrooms which are swallowed. However, it also can come as a powder in capsules. The powder can be sniffed, smoked, injected or mixed with liquid, such as juice, and swallowed.

### **LSD** (acid, blotter, cid, microdot, windowpane)

LSD, (lysergic acid diethylamide) is a white, odourless, crystalline powder made in illegal laboratories. The pure drug is almost invisible. It is usually taken by mouth. To be sold on the streets it is packaged in tablets, capsules, gelatin sheets or pieces of blotting paper, often with cartoon drawings on them.

**MESCALINE** is derived from “buttons” of the peyote cactus, which are chopped or ground and sold in capsules or prepared chemically.

**PCP** comes in the form of a white or coloured crystal or powder or tablet. It is usually mixed with tobacco or marijuana and smoked. Effects can last as long as two weeks. Users can become violent.

### **SALVIA DIVINORUM** (magic mint, Sally D, salvia)

This is a form of sage from the mint family. Despite being restricted from being sold in stores, it is available for purchase online or in drug paraphernalia or “head shops”. The leaves are chewed or made into a juice or dried and smoked. The effects of this drug include hallucinations, out-of-body experiences, loss of consciousness and memory, and lack of physical coordination. Very little is known about the long term effects of this drug.

### **JIMSON WEED** (stinkweed, locoweed, Angel’s Trumpet, Datura)

This is a legal, but poisonous plant that grows wild and in many gardens in southern Canada. Users can eat the seeds, brew the leaves as a tea, or smoke the dried leaves to experience the hallucinogenic and euphoric effects. The plant, however, has caused poisoning and even death in animals and humans.