



CRIME ALERT

South Side Residence Halls - 4400 Massachusetts Ave, NW DC

Release Date: 08/31/2016

Drug Use and Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault

Incidents:

On 08/26/2016, the consumption of an edible form of a controlled substance resulted in a medical transport of an affiliate who experienced adverse effects from consuming the edible. On 08/30/2016, the American University Police Department (AUPD) received information that a drug-facilitated sexual assault may have occurred in an on campus residential facility on 08/26/2016. It was reported that the victim was unknowingly given an alcoholic beverage which may have contained a controlled substance in it.

What is Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault?

The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) states that drug-facilitated sexual assault occurs when alcohol or drugs are used to compromise an individual's ability to consent to sexual activity. These substances make it easier for a perpetrator to commit sexual assault because they inhibit a person's ability to resist and can prevent them from remembering the assault.

Drug-facilitated sexual assault occurs in two ways: when a perpetrator takes advantage of a victim's voluntary use of drugs or alcohol or when the perpetrator intentionally forces a victim to consume drugs without their knowledge.

- Alcohol is the most common substance used in drug-facilitated sexual assault.
- Prescription drugs such as sleep aids, anxiety medication, muscle relaxers, and tranquilizers may also be used by perpetrators.
- Street drugs, such as GHB, rohypnol, ecstasy, and ketamine can be added to drinks without changing the color, flavor, or odor of the beverage.

Some symptoms may include but are not limited to the following:

- Nausea or loss of bladder or bowel control;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Feeling drunk when you haven't consumed any alcohol or very limited amounts;
- Sudden increase in dizziness, disorientation, or blurred vision;
- Sudden body temperature change that could be signaled by sweating or chattering teeth;
- Waking up without or with a limited memory of any memory of a period of time.

Statistics provided by RAINN indicate that more than 50% of college sexual assaults occur in either August – November. Furthermore, three-fourths of all rapes are committed by someone known to the victim.

The following safety tips are provided to help reduce your risk of being a victim of drug facilitated sexual assaults. If you believe you are the victim of a drug-facilitated sexual assault, *have information relating to these incidents, or witness suspicious activity, please immediately call the American University Police Department at 202-885-3636 (on campus) or 911 for the Metropolitan Police Department.*

Make a Confidential Tip through the American University Police Department Webpage at:

<http://www.american.edu/finance/publicsafety/tips.cfm>

Emergency: 202-885-3636



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The following are safety tips provided by RAINN and AUPD:

- A college environment can foster a false sense of security. Make sure you give new acquaintances time to earn your trust before you begin relying on them.
- If you are going to a party, go with people you trust. Agree to watch each other and plan to leave together. Ensure at least one person in the group remains sober. Do not leave your friends behind in an unknown situation.
- Have a backup plan. Ensure you can get home safely.
- Do not knowingly consume controlled substances such as marijuana, LSD, cocaine, or prescription drugs not specifically prescribed to you. Aside from being illegal, these substances may have adverse effects on your health or may leave you susceptible to being the victim of another crime.
- Beware that many controlled substances come in edible forms including candy and baked goods. Ensure you know what is in the food you are ingesting before you consume it.
- Beware that the consumption of drugs through edible form may delay the effect of the drug and therefore may lead to an increased chance of overdose.
- Protect your drink. Prepare your own drink or watch the person preparing your drink to ensure you can see what goes into it. Do not leave your drink unattended and watch out for your friends' drinks if you can. Discard your drink immediately if it is left unattended.
- Drink from unopened containers or drinks you have prepared.
- Immediately dispose of any drinks which look discolored or taste funny.
- Do not drink community drinks such as jungle juice. There is no way to know what is in it.
- Know your limits. Keep track of how many drinks you've had, and be aware of your and your friend's behavior.
- Be aware of sudden changes in the way your body feels. If something feels wrong, get to a safe place and call (202) 885-3636 (on campus) or 9-1-1 (off campus) and be upfront with the dispatcher so the appropriate attention can be given to you or your friends.

General Tips

- Install RAVE Guardian on your cell phone to provide an immediate connection with AUPD and for a means to report tips.
- Program AUPD into your cell phone for on campus emergencies: 202-885-3636
- Do not let anyone follow you into the building, or admit anyone as a guest unless they are your guest.
- Be aware of the emergency telephones (yellow boxes on pillars, blue light phone towers, and red telephones) located on campus, in building lobbies, elevators, and in parking lots.
- The sexual assault prevention coordinator (SAPC) serves to develop and implement prevention and education programs for the AU community about sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. The SAPC is also available to provide resources and referrals for survivors of sexual assault and can assist survivors in contacting counselors or a victim advocate when requested. The SAPC can be reached at 202-885-3055 and is an anonymous resource.
- For information about resources available to victims/survivors of sexual assault, please visit the Wellness Center website at: <http://www.american.edu/ocl/wellness/sexual-assault-resources.cfm>
- For more information about resources available to users of drugs and alcohol, please visit the Wellness Center website at: <http://www.american.edu/ocl/wellness/AOD-Information-and-Resources.cfm>

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