

# Preventing Acquaintance Rape



## a safety guide for teens

### What is acquaintance rape?

Acquaintance rape is when somebody you know—a boyfriend or girlfriend, a friend, a classmate, or even someone you just met—uses coercion (including drugs or alcohol), violence, or threats to force unwanted oral, vaginal, or anal sex. When this happens in a dating relationship, it is commonly known as *date rape*.

### How common is acquaintance rape?

Unfortunately, acquaintance rape is very common. In some surveys, as many as one in four young women reported being verbally or physically pressured into having sex during the past year,<sup>1</sup> while one in 10 high school girls—and one in 20 boys—reported being forced into sex at some point in their lives.<sup>2</sup>

### Can guys get raped?

Yes. Guys can get raped and it has nothing to do with their sexual orientation, appearance, physical size, or strength. Guys can be raped by family members or other people they trust, as well as by strangers. If a guy gets raped, that does not mean he is gay.

#### Did you know?

75% of sexual assaults are committed by someone that the victim knows.<sup>3</sup>

## What are date rape drugs?

An acquaintance may slip drugs into your drink to try to make it easier to victimize you. Being drugged without your knowledge makes consent impossible. ANY drug, even alcohol, can put you at risk. Drugs commonly used in acquaintance rape include:

- \* **Rohypnol** (pronounced row-HIP-nal; also called roofies) is a sedative that can make you feel sleepy, slur your speech, make it difficult to walk, make you black-out, and cause amnesia.
- \* **GHB** is a depressant that may cause nausea, vomiting, dizziness, heart problems, seizures, black-outs, and, in some cases, coma.
- \* **Ketamine** (pronounced keet-ah-meem; also called Special K) is an animal tranquilizer that can cause delirium, loss of memory, depression, and long-term memory and cognitive difficulties.

**Did you know?**  
28% of rape victims are assaulted by their boyfriends and 35% are sexually assaulted by relatives.<sup>4</sup>

## What can I do to be safe?

- \* Expect respect and keep away from people who don't show you respect.
- \* Be clear about your limits: let the other person know what you want and don't want to do. You have the right to change your mind, to say "no," or to agree to some sexual activities and not to others.
- \* Don't allow a person to touch you if it makes you uncomfortable. If your limits are reached or you sense danger, speak your mind and act immediately. Make a scene if necessary.
- \* Avoid excessive drinking or drugs. They reduce your ability to think and communicate clearly. Being drunk or high does not give anyone permission to assault you.
- \* Pour your own beverage and keep it in sight. Date rape drugs can be put into drinks and are often undetectable.
- \* Don't hang out in places that keep you isolated from others. Although you may feel you can take care of yourself, it is always wise to be careful.
- \* Trust your instincts. If you feel that a person is not trustworthy or a situation is unsafe, leave.
- \* Have a back-up plan. For example, if you're going out to a party in a different neighborhood, make sure someone you trust knows where you're going. Have a person you can call to come and get you if you need to leave without your original ride.



*Avoid excessive drinking or drugs. They make it harder to think and communicate clearly.*

**Fast Fact**  
38% of acquaintance rape victims are 14-17 years old.<sup>5</sup>

# reality check: acquaintance rape myths & facts

## MYTH

Girls who claim that they were raped are just looking for attention.

## FACT

No one wants the sort of attention that comes after being raped. Rape is an extremely traumatic experience that is difficult to overcome.

## MYTH

Rape only happens to girls.

## FACT

Rape can happen to anyone.

## MYTH

If a guy pays for the date, he deserves sex.

## FACT

Nobody "owes" anybody sex. No one has a right to expect that a date will end in sex.

## MYTH

Girls who wear short skirts or tight tops are looking for sex.

## FACT

Rape has nothing to do with physical appearance; it's about power and control. How a girl dresses is not an invitation for sex.

## MYTH

Only strangers and dirty old men in dark alleys commit rapes.

## FACT

The vast majority of rapes are committed by people who already knew their victims.

## MYTH

Girls who are raped are asking for it.

## FACT

Rape is never the victim's fault. Nobody asks for or deserves to be raped.

## MYTH

Rape is just about sex.

## FACT

Rape is about power and control. It's a crime in which sex is used as a weapon.

## MYTH

When a girl says "no" she really means "yes."

## FACT

No means no.

## For Additional Information on Staying Safe, Visit...

- \* 911Rape → [www.911rape.org](http://www.911rape.org)
- \* National Sexual Violence Resource Center → [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)
- \* Project Respect → [www.yesmeansyes.com](http://www.yesmeansyes.com)
- \* Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) → [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)
- \* The Date Safe Project → [www.thedatesafeproject.org/pledge\\_for\\_action.htm](http://www.thedatesafeproject.org/pledge_for_action.htm)
- \* The Safe Space → [www.thesafespace.org](http://www.thesafespace.org)

## References

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