

# Drink spiking – don't let it happen to you

## A fact sheet for patrons

### What is drink spiking?

Drink spiking is a growing problem. It happens when alcohol or another substance is added to your drink without you knowing. Even though drink spiking is illegal, it has occurred in Queensland.

Drink spiking is a dangerous practice that can expose you to unsafe situations including:

- assault
- robbery
- rape and sexual assault
- unsafe sex leading to unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease
- health affects of unknown drugs
- death.

The Liquor Licensing Division is working with other Queensland Government agencies, licensed premises and community organisations to help stamp out this dangerous practice.

### Some facts about drink spiking

- The majority of victims are female
- Some victims are raped or sexually assaulted
- Some victims have died from the effects of a spiked drink
- Many victims knew their attacker
- Drink spiking doesn't just happen to young women in their 20s – many victims are aged over 30 years
- Alcoholic drinks are those most commonly spiked, but many incidents have also included having soft drinks, tea, coffee and hot chocolate being spiked
- Drink spiking doesn't just happen when drugs are added – many times it is when extra alcohol is added to your drink

### How will I know if my drink has been spiked?

Chances are you won't smell, see or taste any difference to your drink, particularly if it is spiked with alcohol. The warning signs include:

- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Feeling sick or sleepy
- Feeling drunk, even if you have only had a little alcohol to drink
- Passing out
- Waking up feeling disoriented and sick, with memory blanks about the night before.

### How can I prevent my drink being spiked?

Drink spiking happens more than you may realise. It is a growing problem, not just in Queensland, but around the world.

Research has shown the majority of drink spiking incidents occur in late night venues such as nightclubs. However it can happen anywhere – even at a private party.

By taking some simple precautions you can protect yourself and your friends from drink spiking:

- Be aware that drink spiking happens – in quiet premises and private parties as well as in noisy, crowded nightclubs.
- Don't leave your drink unattended – for example when dancing, going to the toilet or becoming involved in a conversation. It only takes a second to add more alcohol or to drop in a pill or some powder.
- Avoid sharing drinks and be wary of accepting drinks from people you don't know very well.
- Buy your own drinks and know what you are drinking. Don't drink something you didn't see poured or opened.
- Throw away drinks that taste funny or salty.
- Try to stick with your group. Potential offenders may try to separate you from your friends.

- If you feel sick or dizzy ask someone you trust to take you to a safe place.
- Look out for your friends – many people become more trusting as the night goes on.
- If you notice any change in a friend's demeanour or behaviour, report the incident immediately. Quick action may prevent a sexual assault.
- If someone collapses and is unconscious call an ambulance immediately – but don't leave them alone.

**Drink spiking is dangerous and can have serious criminal and health consequences.**

**Be Smart. Don't leave your drink unattended.**

**For more information please contact:**

The Liquor Licensing Division  
Web site: [www.liquor.qld.gov.au](http://www.liquor.qld.gov.au)  
or call 1300 658 030 (for the cost of a local call)

24-hour Sexual Assault Helpline: 1800 010 120

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The laws referred to in this guide are complex and various qualifications may apply in different circumstances. You are encouraged to obtain independent legal or financial advice if you are unsure of how these laws apply to your situation.

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