

Stay safe - drink spiking

There have been concerning reports of drink spiking in Bendigo. Our Alcohol and Other Drugs team offers some advice to keep you and your friends safe while out and about.

What is drink spiking?

Drink spiking is adding a substance to another person's drink without their knowledge. It's illegal and can cause harm. The main substances used are GHB, Ketamine and extra alcohol. All have a sedative affect which can cause unconsciousness. Here are some tips to stay safe:

Be careful accepting drinks

If you are offered a drink by someone you don't know or don't know well walk to the bar with that person. Accept the drink from the barman only.

Change your drinking habits

- Request a drink in a bottle or can and watch the bartender remove the top so that no third person is involved.
- Hold your drink from the top with an open palm covering the glass.
- Don't leave your drink unattended. Finish it before going to the toilet or dance floor. Keep the drink with you and don't leave it on the table.
- Don't share drinks. Don't think it's okay to finish off someone else's drink. If you have not seen it poured you don't know what it contains.

Look for obvious signs of tampering

Things such as your drink being moved from where you left it, the straw having been taken out or one put in, less or more liquid than you remember, odd bubbling or fizzing, a different color or odour, floaters of any kind, empty medicinal packets next to the glass or on the floor.

Space your alcoholic drinks with glasses of water

This helps you to stay alert and less likely to become disoriented. (Beware many of the chemicals used are tasteless and colourless!)

Watch for symptoms of being spiked

- Feeling drowsy
- Feeling sick
- A feeling that you are losing control
- Your limbs feel like they cannot move
- Dizziness and queasiness
- Starting to lose consciousness.

These symptoms will come on faster than drunkenness, so it's important to know how your body reacts to alcohol so you can tell the difference. Seek help immediately from friends or bar staff. If you feel you are in danger call 000.

Keep an eye on your friends

If you feel that something is not right with a friend get them out of the venue and keep an eye on them. Seek medical attention if their condition gets worse and phone 000 if you think they are in immediate danger

Alcohol and Other Drugs Support

Our AOD team runs several programs to support people with alcohol and other drugs issues and their families. To learn more about these programs visit www.bchs.com.au or call 5406 1200.