

## **Date Rape Drugs - Data Summary**

The recent media attention to the topic of drug use in sexual assault has greatly increased the number of cases submitted for the analysis of blood and urine samples from victims. Accompanying the samples have been many questions from investigators and the doctors who examine the victims. Some of the most frequent questions; how long can you detect a drug? Do you prefer blood or urine? Is there any point in taking a sample after x hours?, prompted the research which is summarized in the table below.

The data was distributed to investigators following an oral presentation along with information on the effects of benzodiazepines and GHB. Some words of caution are advised. Investigators given this material for reference should be given a basic understanding of drug metabolism and the concept of a half-life. The notes at the end of the table should be highlighted and explained. All benzodiazepines have the ability to interfere with memory acquisition, but the ones asterisked are particularly noted for causing amnesia. the duration of effects of the drugs and the length of time they can be detected in blood and urine are based on single dose studies. Obviously, larger doses will extend these times. It must be stressed that the effects of a drug will vary with the individual's metabolism, experience, general health, the presence or absence of other drugs, etc. Obviously, the length of time any substance can be detected in blood and urine is also very dependant on the sensitivity and specificity of the analytical methods employed by the laboratory. Some data was inferred from related information. Given these cautions, the table can serve as a useful guideline for sexual assault investigators.

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