



Australian Government



# GHB OR GAMMA-HYDROXYBUTYRATE

GHB is a drug commonly found in the dance scene and is sometimes referred to as liquid ecstasy due to its stimulating, euphoric and supposed aphrodisiac qualities. Chemically-speaking, it is not related to ecstasy (MDMA) at all. Mildly salty in flavour, yet colourless and odorless, it's also used as a date-rape drug. When mixed with alcohol it can intoxicate quickly.

Other names include fantasy, grievous bodily harm (GBH), liquid ecstasy, liquid E, G.

## GHB facts at a glance

### The signs and symptoms of using GHB can include:

- drowsiness
- induced sleep
- nausea
- reduced inhibitions
- dizziness
- headache
- confusion and agitation.

### The consequences of using GHB may include:

- extreme drowsiness/grogginess
- hallucinations
- difficulty focussing eyes
- vomiting
- impaired movement and speech
- reduced muscle tone
- disorientation
- convulsions/seizures
- coma
- respiratory distress
- slowed heart rate
- lowered blood pressure
- amnesia
- death
- can be addictive.

## **Physical effects of GHB**

Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) is a depressant drug that contains a sedative and, at sufficient doses, has anaesthetic properties (that means it knocks you out). Depressant drugs slow down brain and central nervous system activity.

GHB has been identified as a 'date-rape drug' because it leaves users with amnesia, impaired movement and speech. It can be easily camouflaged in drinks as it is difficult to taste.

## **Problems using GHB**

There's a very fine line between the amount of GHB required to get someone intoxicated and how much will put them in a coma. As there's no way of knowing the strength of the GHB, the chances of overdosing are very high. Combining GHB with other drugs also increases the dangers. For example, using GHB with other central nervous system depressants such as alcohol, Valium or heroin, increases the risk of overdosing significantly.