

Profile: GHB

What is GHB?

The chemical gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) occurs naturally in human cells. GHB is a central nervous system depressant that was initially sold in health food stores to improve physical performance, reduce stress, induce sleep, build muscle, and burn fat. It is currently a controlled and illegal substance with no accepted medical use.

What does GHB look like?

GHB is sold as a clear and odorless liquid that has a slightly salty taste. It is stored in a variety of containers such as water bottles, eyedroppers, and/or vitamin bottles. Though less common, GHB also comes in powder form.



GHB powder

Photo by El Dopa © 2002 Erowid.org

How is GHB used?



Liquid GHB

GHB is ingested orally. Users mix it with a beverage, such as water, juice, or alcohol. The effects are felt within 10 to 20 minutes and last 3 to 6 hours. Illicit use of GHB often takes place in social environments, such as parties, clubs, and raves.

Users like its intoxicating, euphoric, and sedative effects.

GHB & Date Rape

Because it is odorless and colorless, GHB can be mixed with almost any beverage and is extremely difficult to detect. Both males and females have become victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault by attackers who slipped GHB into their drinks. The effects of GHB, especially when combined with alcohol, can incapacitate a person and induce blackouts and memory loss. These effects make it easy for sexual predators to facilitate sexual encounters without victims' consent.

What are some slang terms for GHB?

- ✗ GBH
- ✗ Gamma Oh
- ✗ Goop
- ✗ Jib
- ✗ Liquid E
- ✗ Liquid Ecstasy
- ✗ Liquid X
- ✗ Salty Water
- ✗ Sleep
- ✗ Soap
- ✗ Somatomax
- ✗ Vita G
- ✗ Growth Hormone Booster
- ✗ Georgia Home Boy
- ✗ Great Hormones at Bedtime
- ✗ Grievous Bodily Harm

How can I tell if someone has taken GHB?

Most GHB is made in clandestine laboratories from the chemicals found in floor cleaner and nail polish, so the chemical composition and potency of GHB is highly variable. Users have no definite way to know the strength of a dose of GHB, which increases the risk of an overdose.

Depending on the dose and potency, GHB users may appear disinhibited, disoriented, and confused. They may

GHB & Alcohol

GHB is especially dangerous when taken with alcohol or other depressants and can cause respiratory failure and death.

be sleepy and lethargic, and lack coordination and balance. GHB users may experience headaches, nausea and vomiting,

hallucinations, and amnesia. They may also have seizures, lose consciousness, fall into a coma, or die.

Long-term GHB users develop tolerance to the drug and require more and more to achieve the desired effect. Those who become dependent experience withdrawal symptoms, including anxiety, tremor, insomnia, confusion, delirium, and hallucinations.



GHB kit- GHB & related chemicals
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Online Resources

Drug Early Warning System (DEWS)

www.dewsonline.org

Center for Substance Abuse Research

www.cesar.umd.edu

National Institute on Drug Abuse

www.nida.nih.gov

United States Department of Justice,
Drug Enforcement Administration

www.dea.gov

Office of Drug Control Policy

www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

Partnership for a Drug Free America

www.drugfreeamerica.com

Streetdrugs.org

www.streetdrugs.org

Adapted from www.justfacts.org, a website designed to provide sexual health, alcohol, and other drug education. Provided by:



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