

# sex, drugs and alcohol...

## What's the connection?

Drinking is a behaviour seen as common place within Australia and often a rite of passage as people move from their teenage years onto becoming young adults. Although fun and enjoyable, alcohol and drugs can influence the way you think, the decisions you make and how you behave sexually.

Mixing drugs and alcohol with sexual activity is not a good idea because your ability to protect yourself is often taken away. This can put you and others at risk of sexual assault, unwanted sex, STI transmission and unintended pregnancy.



## What can it lead to?



### Increased risk of STIs

There is a strong association between alcohol consumption and adverse consequences such as unsafe sex, often leading to an increased risk of STIs.



### Consent to sex

Consent is a voluntary, sober, enthusiastic, creative, wanted, informed, mutual, honest and verbal agreement. When someone is drunk or high they cannot legally consent to sexual activity.



### Unwanted sex

The risk of unwanted sex and sexual assault increases after drinking alcohol. Alcohol and drugs lower your inhibitions and increase confidence meaning you might say "yes" to something you wouldn't normally do.



### Drink spiking

Most drink spiking is considered "prank spiking", typically for fun or amusement most of the time from someone you know. However, there is a risk it can be used to instigate a sexual assault.



### Harm to unborn babies

Alcohol and drug use may have negative health effects on the unborn baby. Binge drinking during pregnancy can increase the risk of poor development, birth defects and mental health problems for children later in life.



### Low condom use

Young people are 5 to 16 times less likely to use condoms during sex when under the influence of drugs and alcohol.



### Poor decision making

Alcohol use has been shown to increase high risk sexual behaviour and your ability to make the best decisions.



### Sperm production

If used in high amounts, cannabis has been found to reduce sperm count and increase the rate of abnormal sperm.

## Who is at risk?

Due to their tendency to experiment and the influence from friends, partners, media and society; young people tend to be at a higher risk of combining sexual activity and drug and alcohol use.



## How to protect yourself



Don't leave drinks unattended



Avoid drinks from strangers



Use condoms when sexually active



Always ensure sexual activity is consensual



Limit the combination of alcohol, drugs and sex



Set limits and decide on your boundaries whilst sober -



Keep an eye on your mates



Drink water before, during and after consuming alcohol

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