

# what's your poison?

## club, pub and party guide

### Highs or Lows?

Whether it's a night out at the local pub or a full-on three day festival, going out to 'let your hair down' can be very enjoyable.

However, for some people this may lead to **serious binge drinking** whilst others may be tempted to try drugs for the first time. Some may take partying a step further and use more **drugs** than they usually do or end up **mixing** a variety of drugs, including **alcohol**.

Being 'out of it' greatly increases the chance of being involved in violence, **criminal damage**, accidents and robbery. Even if you think you're safe, going on a binge can easily cause social embarrassment and affect your performance on a day-to-day basis. Continuous heavy partying may seriously affect your **physical and mental health**.

There is also concern about the growing rate of sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancies, especially amongst young people. And with the incidence of drug assisted rape on the rise it pays to be careful.



### The Scene

Recent surveys have shown that a majority of clubbers have taken drugs at some time in their life. In recent years ecstasy has been the most commonly used drug whilst clubbing, followed by cannabis and cocaine. However, more drugs are coming onto the scene;

some of these certainly won't make you feel like dancing and could really put you on your arse.

Even if you only use alcohol as your drug of choice remember that it is a mind-altering substance and can be equally as dangerous as other drugs if abused.

One survey found that nearly a quarter of clubbers had visited a doctor for health problems that they perceived to have been caused by their alcohol or drug use.

## Tips for Staying Safe

### Getting there and back

- Avoid going out on your own, try to carry a personal attack alarm with you
- Plan your journey to and from home and only use licensed cab firms, try to travel with someone you trust
- Don't travel with a driver who may be drunk or on drugs
- Make sure somebody knows where you are going and what time you will be home
- Make sure your mobile phone is charged and has credit
- If you think someone is following you, check by crossing the street to see if they follow. If you are still worried, get to the nearest place where there are other people and ask for help
- Don't take short-cuts through dark or remote areas
- Look and feel confident, don't attract attention by looking vulnerable



## Whilst you are out

- Make sure you feel well and have eaten before you take anything
- If you do take drugs, make sure you are with friends and tell them exactly what you've taken. If you get into difficulties it will help if someone knows what you have taken
- Make sure you keep hydrated, particularly if you are taking dance drugs like ecstasy. But beware that



too much water can be dangerous

- Take regular, short breaks from the dance floor
- Avoid drinking in rounds; you may drink faster than normal
- Being 'off it' will make you look very unattractive as well as vulnerable, and you may do things you wouldn't normally do
- Beware of drink promotions or offers of cheap drugs, they could prove more costly than you imagined
- Keep your belongings close to you. Keep your house keys in your pocket and if someone grabs your bag let it go



- Remember that noisy clubs can permanently damage your hearing
- Look out for your mates – for your sake and theirs

## Drink spiking and drug assisted rape

- Watch your drinks being poured, don't accept a drink from anyone

you don't trust and never leave your drink unattended

- Don't take drinks from large open containers such as punch bowls

- Don't share or exchange drinks
- If your drink looks or tastes odd get rid of it, but also remember that a spiked drink can appear quite normal
- If you begin to feel drunk after only a few drinks, seek help from a trusted friend or the management at the premises

## Sex under the influence

- Be aware that drinking alcohol or taking drugs can lower your inhibitions and affect your judgement (not to mention your performance!)
- Make sure you carry condoms with you
- If you think you are likely to go a bit too far (and do something you later regret), enlist the support of a trusted friend to help keep your feet on the ground
- Never feel pressurised to have sex if you don't want to



## Help and Information

If you're in need of urgent assistance call 999

To find out more look at these websites:

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

or call 0800 776600 for 24/7 advice about drink and drugs

[www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

for information on staying safe

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/drugs](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/drugs)

for information on drug and alcohol services

This leaflet has been produced with funding from NHS Warwickshire (Nuneaton and Bedworth Health Improvement and Well Being Group) and the Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team.