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New Electronic Device and Mobile App Designed to Detect ‘Date Rape’ Drugs in Drinks

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A company in Toronto is developing a new electronic device and mobile app to detect 'date rape' drugs in drinks, according to *CNN Money*.

The product, called Personal Drink ID (pd.id), sends an alert to a person's phone if it detects their drink has been drugged. The device, which measures 3.5 inches long, looks like a small USB key, the article notes. It can be dipped in and out of a drink, and is small enough to fit in a pocket or purse.

The company's founder, J. David Wilson, said he expects to release pd.id in April, at a cost of $75.

Earlier this year, researchers in Singapore announced they have developed a new test that can detect the date-rape drug GHB in drinks. GHB is predominantly a central nervous system depressant. It can be produced in clear liquid, white powder, tablet, and capsule forms. Because GHB is odorless and tasteless, it can be slipped into someone's drink without detection.

The drug incapacitates people who ingest it, making them vulnerable to sexual assault.

The researchers mixed a fluorescent compound with a sample of drink containing GHB and found the mixture changed color in less than 30 seconds. They said the color change was seen in clear and light-colored drinks, including water and vodka. Better lighting was needed to see the change in darker drinks, such as cola and whiskey.

They are working with product designers to come up with a portable detection kit within a year.