

## Women and Drugs

---

[Marty Mann](#), NCADD's founder, was the first woman to recover from alcoholism in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). As a result, NCADD has always been dedicated to increasing public awareness and support for women struggling with addiction to alcohol and drugs. Addiction does not discriminate between men and women.

### **Drug Addiction: Women vs. Men**

Although there are many similarities between men and women when it comes to drug use and addiction, there are also many differences. Differences that are important to take into consideration both in understanding the addiction as well as in treating it.

Some of the differences for women center on the physical effects of addiction while others focus on how women relate to their families, their communities and their children. All of these factors can affect how women respond to treatment. Many of the symptoms of addiction for women tend to be "inner directed" including anxiety, shame, and depression. For men, the symptoms tend to be more visible and external — aggressive or drunk driving, fighting and assault. As a result, there is a need for, and benefit to, gender-specific services for women who also recognize the important role that trauma may play in her addiction, and as a result, in her recovery.

**Your best friend, your child, your mother, your sister, your co-worker, your lover, yourself.  
Addiction and recovery is a women's issue.**

### **Women, Drugs and Pregnancy:**

Drug use for a pregnant woman is doubly dangerous because it can interfere with her health and ability to support the pregnancy. And, research has shown that some drugs, legal and illegal, can be harmful to her child. For her own health and the health of her baby, a **woman should avoid using alcohol and all drugs, legal and illegal**, unless prescribed by her physician, from the time she plans to become pregnant or when she becomes pregnant.

### **Women and Prescription Drugs:**

A recent research study reported that women are more likely than men to be prescribed an abusable prescription drug, particularly narcotics and antianxiety drugs—in some cases 55% more

likely. And many prescriptions are refilled for decades. As a result, a medication that was originally prescribed for a temporary anxiety problem and has been used continuously for years can now pose a serious risk for physical addiction.

### **How Can I Be Addicted, My Doctor Prescribed It?**

Many women do not realize that they are addicted to medications and that some of their physical illnesses or emotional complaints may be the result of addiction.

#### **A Special Caution: Date Rape Drugs:**

Date rape drugs are sometimes used to assist a sexual assault. Sexual assault is any type of sexual activity that a person does not agree to including touching, sexual intercourse, rape and attempted rape. The drugs often have no color, smell, or taste and can be slipped into your drink when you are not looking. In most cases, you can't even tell you are being drugged until it's too late--you become weak and confused, or even pass out, so that you are unable to refuse sex, defend yourself and may not remember what happened while you were drugged. Date rape drugs are used on both females and males.

#### **Most Common Date Rape Drugs:**

- **Rohypnol** (roh-HIP-nol). Rohypnol is also known as Circles, Forget Pill, Lunch Money, Mexican Valium, Mind Erasers, Poor Man's Quaalude, R-2, Roofies, Roopies, Rope, Rophies, Ruffies, Trip-and-Fall, Whiteys.
- **GHB**, which is short for Gamma hydroxyButyric acid. GHB is also known as Bedtime Scoop, Cherry Meth, Easy Lay, Energy Drink, G, Gamma 10, Georgia Home Boy, G-Juice, Gook, Goop, Great Hormones, Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH), Liquid E, Liquid Ecstasy, Liquid X, PM, Salt Water, Soap. Somatomax, Vita-G.
- **Ketamine** also known as Black Hole, Bump, Cat Valium, Green, Jet, K, K-Hole, Kit Kat, Psychedelic Heroin, Purple, Special K, Super Acid. These drugs also are also commonly known as "club drugs" because they tend to be used at dance clubs, concerts, and "raves."

For additional information: NCADD Fact Sheet: [Use of Alcohol and Other Drugs Among Women](#) and NCADD Fact Sheet: [Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects](#).

## Women and Drugs

---

If you are concerned about your own use of alcohol or drugs, [Get Help](#). If you are concerned about a member of your family or friend, [For Family or Friends](#).

Or [Find an Affiliate](#) near you.

**FOR WOMEN WHO ARE HAVING A PROBLEM WITH DRUGS...**

**THERE IS HOPE    THERE IS HELP    THERE IS HEALING**