

Join Together Online

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More Women Drinking ‘Defensively’

Stung by stories of date-rape drugs dropped in drinks, women are more apt to buy their own drinks and keep an eye on them when they’re sitting at bars, Knight-Ridder reported Sept. 6.

Campus seminars, e-mail warnings, and word of mouth have combined to get more women to watch their drinks – and to watch their friends’ drinks when they step away. Some won’t even put their drinks down. Many women don’t want men bringing them drinks from the bar; they will still accept a drink, but will accompany the buyer to the bar to get it.

“I never accept a drink from a guy,” said Chicago resident Stacy Conn, 27. “I never turn my back on a drink. And if I somehow forget the drink, well, I walk away from it.”

Some companies also market test cards, coasters, and swizzle sticks that drinkers can use to see if their drinks have been spiked.

“People have been conditioned to be safe in many different ways, from who you go out with at the beginning of the night to how you get home at the end of the night,” said Chicago nightclub owner Billy Dec.

The media frenzy over date-rape drugs has died down, but drugs like GHB, Rohypnol, and Ketamine are still widely available. “In Las Vegas, it’s a big problem. An epidemic. You have to worry about it when going out to a nightclub here,” said Las Vegas narcotics officer Sgt. Blake Quakenbush. About 100 cases involving use of date-rape drugs were reported in Las Vegas last year.

Experts continue to warn, however, that the most dangerous date-rape drug is alcohol itself.

This article is online at <http://www.jointogether.org/y/0,2521,578195,00.html>. Visit www.jointogether.org for complete news and funding coverage, resources and advocacy tools to advance effective drug and alcohol policy, prevention and treatment.