



Interference with drinks “Spiking”

Taxi Compliance Officer Information Sheet 14

What is it, and how does it affect me ?

To spike a drink means to put alcohol or drugs into someone’s drink without their knowledge or permission maybe to then rob or sexually assault them, although sometimes it is intended as a joke. Drink spiking is illegal and reports of it have increased a lot lately.

Many of you are used to picking up drunk customers. Be aware that sometimes there may be more to it than just having had too much to drink. If your passenger shows signs of

- Confusion, Nausea or vomiting, Hallucinations, Disorientation, Loss of ability to communicate properly, Paranoia, Poor coordination, Unconsciousness

consider if it might be due to “spiking”. If the person is with someone who isn’t known to them that should also give you concern.

What should I do if I think someone has been a victim of “spiking” ?

If it’s a medical emergency then call for an ambulance (you could also take them to the medical unit near the Fountains on some Friday/Saturday nights).

If they agree, or you are very worried (for example the passengers aren’t apparently known to each other), then call 999 or find a police officer nearby.

If they don’t want the police now, you can encourage the customer to seek medical help and report it to the police later on 101. If the customer is sick, consider giving them a plastic bag to keep their soiled items in. We may need to forensically test them later.

Make sure they have someone to look after them at their destination.

What will the police do ?

If the victim does not want the police to take action, we would record it as a crime and respect their wishes. If they do want us to help, we will commence an investigation. We can take a urine sample to see what drugs are involved up to a couple of days later but ideally we need to do it within 12 hours. There is a special police Operation to deal with these reports and victims will be fully supported.

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This is one of a series of information sheets produced for the benefit of Driver, Vehicle and Operator licence holders by Police Constable 4645 Patrick QUINTON, Taxi Compliance Officer, The Bridewell Police Station, Bristol, BS1 2AA

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