



Sussex Police FOI Report: Spiking by Injection and Spiking Drinks

What is spiking?

Spiking is giving someone alcohol or drugs without them knowing or agreeing. For example, in their drink or with a needle.

Spiking can happen to anyone anywhere – no matter their age, gender, sexuality or ethnicity. It can be carried out by strangers or by people you know.

Most cases of spiking do not result in sexual assault or theft. But spiking can cause severe distress, emotional harm and anxiety. It can take a long time to recover from someone spiking you.

Spiking can put you at greater risk of injury, theft or assault. It is also dangerous to drive when someone has spiked you. This is why we treat spiking reports as seriously as those of violent, physical attacks.

Types of spiking

Spiking is giving someone else drugs or alcohol without their knowledge or permission. For example:

- drink spiking - adding drugs or alcohol to someone else's drink
- needle spiking - injecting drugs into someone else's body with a needle or auto-injector pen
- vape or cigarette spiking - giving someone drugs in a cigarette or e-cigarette
- food spiking - adding drugs to someone's food

Giving someone more alcohol or drugs than they were expecting and consented to is also spiking. For example, giving someone double shots instead of single ones.

It's sensible not to accept a drink from a stranger or leave your drink unattended. But sometimes people get spiked by people they know and trust too.

How to tell if someone has spiked you

It can be difficult to know if someone has spiked you. The symptoms vary depending on what someone has spiked you with. They can be similar to having excess alcohol. If you start to feel strange or more drunk than you thought you should be, seek help straight away. If you feel seriously unwell, call 999 or ask someone to get you emergency medical assistance.

There is no right or wrong way to feel. Some victims need emergency medical assistance, others don't. Whatever your situation, we are here for you.

Spiking and the law

Spiking is illegal and carries a sentence of up to ten years in prison. If a robbery, sexual assault or other crime took place, the sentence may be even longer.

Spiking offences are covered by more than one law. Most spiking cases are offences under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861. This covers the use of harmful substances. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 covers cases where someone spikes a victim to sexually assault them.

Reporting spiking

Spiking is a high-impact crime that rightly gets a lot of publicity. The chances of someone spiking you on a night out or at a festival seem to be low. But not all victims of spiking report it to the police. Because of this we can't be sure how many spiking victims there really are.

We would like to know about any spiking incident, no matter how long ago it happened. Our main concern is to make sure that the victim gets the support they need. Once the victim is well enough, we are here to support and investigate what happened.

Your spiking report enables us to launch this investigation and prevent others from being spiked. But even if someone spiked you more than seven days ago, it also helps us build a better picture of how much spiking really goes on and where. Even if we might not always be able to identify and find the person who spiked you.

Getting tested

Some drugs leave the body within 12 hours or much sooner. If you report to us as soon as possible, so we can take a sample that could be used for testing.

Other drugs stay in the body longer, so we might be able to test you up to seven days after the incident. But if someone spiked you more than seven days ago, we would still like you to report it. We may still be able to investigate and collect evidence.

If someone has spiked you with alcohol, there are other ways we can investigate what happened to you.

You can report even if you don't want to get tested

You can tell us about spiking even if you don't want to go through with forensic testing and an investigation.

If you're not sure if you're ready to report spiking, we've put together information that might help you decide whether reporting is right for you.

Reporting attempted spiking

You can report attempted spiking to us, where a spiking attempt was disrupted before anyone became a victim. For example:

- If a drink has an unexpected smell, taste or colour
- If you notice a tablet or powder in a drink
- If you see someone trying to spike a drink
- If someone tried to inject you with drugs, but failed

If anyone is found to be in possession of illegal drugs that might be used to spike someone, you can report it.

If you notice someone behaving suspiciously around a group they clearly don't know, you can tell security or a member of staff. You can also call us on 999 in an emergency or report it to give us information about someone who may be attempting to spike people.

You are not to blame

Sometimes people are afraid to speak to the police. For example, because they took illegal drugs or were drinking alcohol before someone spiked them. Sometimes they have little or no recollection of what happened. They may have a criminal record and worry that the authorities won't treat them fairly. They might worry that no one will believe them.

No matter who you are, how long ago the spiking happened or what took place, our prime concern is to give you the support you need. We listen, understand and guide you through the investigation process.



Report online at www.sussex.police.uk or call 101.
In an emergency always call 999.

Find us on social media    

Disclaimer

Due to the high volume of FOI requests made to Sussex Police relating to the deliberate contamination of drinks and/or the injection of persons with an unknown substance, commonly referred to as 'Spiking' incidents, a single response has been compiled covering the many points detailed in the different requests.

To ensure we comply with data protection legislation Sussex Police will only provide aggregated values in separate tables to protect the identity of the victims of these offences. We are unable to provide an offence summary as each offence would need to be manually reviewed and redacted.

To identify offences relevant to these FOI requests, we have created a search that looks for certain key words contained within the Crime Summary or Modus Operandi fields for any recorded Sexual Offence or Violence Against the Person Crime Groups as specified within Home Office Counting Rules.

The use of a key word search to identify offences means that the search may not return every relevant offence as it requires the officer recording the offence to have used one of these words within the free text fields searched. Therefore, it should be noted that our response should not be used for comparison purposes with other forces or quoted as being official statistics.

In line with national police data returns, the report is based on crime input date. This means that an offence that has occurred some months or years previously but reported recently, will be counted against the year/month in which it was reported.

The search looks at all recorded crimes within a live police records management system. Volumes may be different compared against previous or subsequent requests as offences can be reclassified and other information used to identify reports can be modified. The report only includes recorded notifiable crimes, excluding crime related incidents and crimes that have been reviewed and changed to no crime.

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Please Note - That the figures shown in this report may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking by Injection does not have a specific Home Office Offence Code (HO Code), Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

Information has been searched using the Crime groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against the Person, including but not restricted to, the HO Codes in the table below, where a combination of the following words have been recorded within the MO:

Spike/ed/ing
Laced & Lacing

WITH EITHER

Needle/s
Syringes/s
Injecting/ion/ed
Puncture
Prick
OR

Needle Stick/ing
OR

Where the HO code of 88/05 has been recorded with the following words in the MO:

Needle/s
Injecting/ion/ed
Syringe/s
Puncture
Prick

Crime Group	HO Return Code & Description	HO Class	Classification Description	
Violence Against The Person	5E - Endangering Life	005/05	Using chloroform, etc., to commit or assist in committing an indictable offence	
		005/10	Endangering life or causing harm by administering poison	
		005/24	Use of noxious substances or things to cause harm or intimidate	
	8N - Assault with Injury	008/02		ADMINISTERING POISON TO AGGRIEVE
				Administering poison with intent to injure or annoy
				ADMINISTER POISON WITH INTENT TO INJURE OR ANNOY
Sexual Offences	88C - Other miscellaneous sexual offences	088/05	Administering a substance with intent	
			ADMINISTERING A SUBSTANCE WITH INTENT TO COMMIT A SEXUAL OFFENCE	



Recorded Crime for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Spiking by Injection
 This Information has been shown by HO Return Code, HO Outcome & Local Authority
 Report period by Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

Please see the "Search Conditions" report for clarification around the Crime Groups, HO Codes & Words used to complete this search

Please Note - That the figures shown in this report may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking by Injection does not have a specific HO Code, Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

HO Return Code	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
105A - Assault without injury	0	1	1	0	0	2
19C - Rape of a female aged 16 and over	0	0	0	0	1	1
19F - Rape of a male aged 16 and over	0	1	0	0	0	1
20A - Sexual assault on a female aged 13 or over	0	1	0	0	0	1
5E - Endangering Life	0	1	0	0	0	1
88C - Other miscellaneous sexual offences	1	5	3	11	1	21
8N - Assault with Injury	0	56	52	25	6	139
Total	1	65	56	36	8	166

Offence HO Outcome	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Evidential difficulties - named suspect identified	0	3	3	0	0	6
Investigation complete no suspect identified	0	57	50	31	2	140
Named suspect identified - victim does not support	0	2	1	1	0	4
Not Applicable	0	0	0	2	6	8
Victim does not support - no suspect identified	1	3	2	2	0	8
Total	1	65	56	36	8	166

Local Authority	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Arun	0	2	0	4	1	7
Brighton and Hove	1	49	33	16	6	105
Chichester	0	0	7	2	1	10
Crawley	0	0	2	3	0	5
Eastbourne	0	5	5	1	0	11
Hastings	0	2	3	2	0	7
Horsham	0	1	2	4	0	7
Lewes	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mid-Sussex	0	1	0	0	0	1
Rother	0	3	0	1	0	4
Wealden	0	1	1	1	0	3
Worthing	0	1	2	2	0	5
Total	1	65	56	36	8	166

Recorded Crime for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person
 where reference has been made in the MO to Spiking by Injection
 Report period by Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024



Please see the "Search Conditions" report for clarification around the Crime Groups, HO Codes & Words used to complete this search

Please Note - That the figures shown in this report may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking by Injection does not have a specific HO Code, Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	40	14	65
2022	7	4	8	9	3	4	6	5	5	2	2	1	56
2023	4	2	0	4	4	2	2	5	5	7	1	0	36
2024	1	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Total	12	11	10	13	7	6	8	11	10	20	43	15	166



Number of Aggrieved for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Spiking by Injection.
Report period by Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

Please see the "Search Conditions" report for clarification around the Crime Groups, HO Codes & Words used to complete this search

Please Note - That the figures shown in this report may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking by Injection does not have a specific HO Code, Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	40	14	65
2022	7	4	8	9	3	4	6	5	4	2	2	1	55
2023	4	2	0	4	4	3	2	5	5	7	0	0	36
2024	1	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Total	12	11	10	13	7	7	8	11	9	20	42	15	165

Number of Aggrieved for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Spiking by Injection. These tables show information separately by Aggrieved Gender, Self-Ethnicity & Age Group
Report period by Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

Please see the "Search Conditions" report for clarification around the Crime Groups, HO Codes & Words used to complete this search

Please Note - That the figures shown in this report may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking by Injection does not have a specific HO Code, Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

Aggrieved Gender	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Female	1	56	45	31	6	139
Male	0	9	9	4	2	24
Transgender	0	0	0	1	0	1
Unknown	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	1	65	55	36	8	165

Age Group	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
14-17 Years	0	0	3	2	0	5
18-20 Years	0	32	27	17	7	83
21+	1	33	25	16	1	76
Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	65	55	36	8	165

Ethnic Self Class	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Chinese Or Other Ethnic Group	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mixed	0	1	0	1	0	2
Not Stated	1	47	21	11	5	85
White	0	17	33	24	3	77
Total	1	65	55	36	8	165

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Spike/ed/ing
Laced & Lacing

WITH EITHER

Drink/s/ing
Beverage/s

OR

Where the HO code of 88/05 has been recorded with the following words in the MO:
Drink/s/ing
Beverage/s

Crime Group	HO Return Code & Description	HO Class	Classification Description
Violence Against The Person	5E - Endangering Life	005/05	Using chloroform, etc., to commit or assist in committing an indictable offence
		005/10	Endangering life or causing harm by administering poison
		005/24	Use of noxious substances or things to cause harm or intimidate
	8N - Assault with Injury	008/02	ADMINISTERING POISON TO AGGRIEVE
			Administering poison with intent to injure or annoy
			ADMINISTER POISON WITH INTENT TO INJURE OR ANNOY
Sexual Offences	88C - Other miscellaneous sexual offences	088/05	Administering a substance with intent
			ADMINISTERING A SUBSTANCE WITH INTENT TO COMMIT A SEXUAL OFFENCE



Recorded Crime for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Drinks Having Been Spiked
 This Information has been shown by HO Return Code, HO Outcome & Local Authority
 Report period by Input Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

This information has been searched using the HO Code of 88/05 Administering a substance with intent to commit a sexual offence where the word "Drink or Beverage" has been mentioned in the MO, or for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & VAP where any reference has been made in the MO to Drinks/Beverages having been spiked, as set out in the "Search Conditions" report

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HO Return Code	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
105A - Assault without injury	0	2	1	2	2	2	0	9
17A - Sexual assault on a Male aged 13 and over	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	4
19C - Rape of a female aged 16 and over	17	9	9	13	13	6	5	72
19D - Rape of a female child under 16	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
19E - Rape of a female child under 13	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
19F - Rape of a male aged 16 and over	1	2	1	2	2	2	0	10
19J - Rape of a female - multiple undefined offenders	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
19K - Rape of a male - multiple undefined offenders	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
20A - Sexual assault on a female aged 13 or over	2	2	4	8	10	3	0	29
22A - Causing sexual activity without consent	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
22B - Sexual activity involving a child under 16	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
5D - Wounding - offence 5/1, 5/6,5/27 only	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
5E - Endangering Life	0	0	1	2	4	0	0	7
88C - Other miscellaneous sexual offences	7	9	3	25	39	36	5	124
8N - Assault with Injury	73	53	40	139	144	124	32	605
8Q - Stalking	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
8R - Malicious Communications	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8U - Controlling and Coercive Behaviour	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	102	78	61	193	219	176	43	872

Offence HO Outcome	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Charged/Summoned	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Community Resolution	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Evidential difficulties - named suspect identified	10	9	9	14	27	6	0	75
Further investigation not in the public interest - police decision.	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Investigation complete no suspect identified	63	51	32	152	159	129	8	594
Named suspect identified - victim does not support	10	7	8	12	9	10	1	57
Named suspect identified, victim/key witness dead or too ill to give evidence	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	4
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	5	11	33	49
Not in the public interest (CPS)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Not in the public interest (Police)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Undertaken by another body or agency	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Victim does not support - no suspect identified	18	10	8	14	18	18	0	86
Total	102	78	61	193	219	176	43	872

Local Authority	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Adur	1	0	2	2	4	3	0	12
Arun	7	6	5	8	2	9	1	38
Brighton and Hove	43	30	25	103	97	83	25	406
Chichester	1	5	5	8	17	8	1	45
Crawley	7	3	1	11	11	9	3	45
Eastbourne	7	2	2	9	22	16	2	60
Hastings	8	8	4	10	12	8	2	52
Horsham	9	5	3	10	7	7	3	44
Lewes	1	1	2	3	3	0	1	11
Mid-Sussex	5	6	4	5	11	9	0	40
Rother	2	3	0	4	2	3	0	14
Wealden	0	0	0	3	7	3	0	13
Worthing	7	7	5	9	20	12	3	63
Unknown	4	2	3	8	4	6	2	29
Total	102	78	61	193	219	176	43	872

Recorded Crime for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Drinks Having Been Spiked
Report period by Input Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

This information has been searched using the HO Code of 88/05 Administering a substance with intent to commit a sexual offence where the word "Drink or Beverage" has been mentioned in the MO, or for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & VAP where any reference has been made in the MO to Drinks/Beverages having been spiked, as set out in the "Search Conditions" report

Please Note - That the figures shown in the table below may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking Drinks does not have a specific HO Code, Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2018	5	7	10	9	8	6	6	17	5	11	11	7	102
2019	5	6	5	7	7	6	6	8	5	3	9	11	78
2020	12	13	9	1	3	0	5	8	0	6	3	1	61
2021	2	0	3	3	3	4	9	9	19	58	62	21	193
2022	21	22	27	22	19	12	16	26	22	11	11	10	219
2023	7	14	22	18	14	7	18	13	17	20	11	15	176
2024	15	12	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43
Total	67	74	92	60	54	35	60	81	68	109	107	65	872

Number of Aggrieved for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person
 where reference has been made in the MO to Drinks Having Been Spiked
 Report period by Input Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

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Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2018	5	7	12	9	8	6	6	17	5	11	10	7	103
2019	5	6	5	7	7	7	5	8	5	4	9	11	79
2020	11	13	9	1	3	0	5	8	0	6	3	1	60
2021	2	0	3	3	3	4	9	9	19	58	61	21	192
2022	22	21	27	22	18	12	16	26	22	11	11	10	218
2023	6	14	22	18	14	7	17	13	15	19	11	14	170
2024	15	12	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43
Total	66	73	94	60	53	36	58	81	66	109	105	64	865



Number of Aggrieved for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Drinks Having Been Spiked

These tables show information separately by Aggrieved Gender, Self-Ethnicity & Age Group
Report period by Input Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

This information has been searched using the HO Code of 88/05 Administering a substance with intent to commit a sexual offence where the word "Drink or Beverage" has been mentioned in the MO, or for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & VAP where any reference has been made in the MO to Drinks/Beverages having been spiked, as set out in the "Search Conditions" report

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Aggrieved Gender	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Female	85	65	45	156	172	128	28	679
Male	16	11	14	31	45	37	9	163
Restricted/ Unknown	2	3	1	5	1	5	6	23
	103	79	60	192	218	170	43	865

Age Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Under 10s	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
10-13 Years	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	5
14-17 Years	5	3	2	4	10	3	0	27
18-20 Years	32	23	17	75	73	50	10	280
21+	63	51	39	110	133	115	30	541
Unknown	3	0	0	1	2	2	3	11
Total	103	79	60	192	218	170	43	865

Ethnic Self Class	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Asian Or Asian British	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Black Or Black British	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Chinese Or Other Ethnic Group	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mixed	1	0	0	0	7	3	0	11
Not Stated	66	46	37	124	110	94	23	500
White	36	33	23	66	100	72	19	349
Total	103	79	60	192	218	170	43	865



Number of Offenders (solved Crime) for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & Violence Against
The Person where reference has been made in the MO to Drinks Having Been Spiked
This table shows information by Offender Gender & Age Group
Report period by Input Calendar Years - 1st January 2018 to 31st March 2024

This information has been searched using the HO Code of 88/05 Administering a substance with intent to commit a sexual offence where the word "Drink or Beverage" has been mentioned in the MO, or for the Crime Groups of Sexual Offences & VAP where any reference has been made in the MO to Drinks/Beverages having been spiked, as set out in the "Search Conditions" report

Please Note - That the figures shown in the table below may not be a true representation of this type of Crime, as the offence of Spiking Drinks does not have a specific HO Code, Flag or Marker and is therefore completely dependent on the free text wording within the MO.

Offender Gender	2018	2023	Total
Male	1	1	2
Total	1	1	2

Age Group	2018	2023	Total
21+	1	1	2
Total	1	1	2

Ethnic Self Class	2018	2023	Total
Not Stated	1	0	1
White	0	1	1
Total	1	1	2