

The Use of “Z-Drugs” to Facilitate Sexual Assault

REFERENCE: Stockham T, Rohrig TP: The use of “Z-drugs” to facilitate sexual assault *Forensic Sci Rev* 22:61; 2010.

ABSTRACT: Zolpidem, zopiclone, and zaleplon are commonly referred to as the “Z-drugs.” The Z-drugs are non-benzodiazepine hypnotics indicated for the short-term treatment of insomnia. Since becoming widely prescribed as sleep aids in the United States, they are increasingly being detected in a variety of forensic specimens. We present a comprehensive overview of the basic chemistry, pharmacodynamics, and pharmacokinetics of zolpidem, zopiclone, and zaleplon, including their interaction with other prescription drugs and ethanol, findings in drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA) casework, and methods of analysis.

KEY WORDS: Drug-facilitated sexual assault, zaleplon, zolpidem, zopiclone.
