

**Florida Poison Information Center - Jacksonville
at Shands Jacksonville
University of Florida Health Science Center**

GHB and GBL Containing Products

Product Description:

GHB (Gamma Hydroxybutyric Acid) has been used in medical investigations, as a nutritional supplement and a street drug. In the 1960's, GHB was used as an investigational anesthetic (sleep-induced drug used in surgery). It was also marketed over-the-counter as a sleep and weight control aid. Bodybuilders claimed that it stimulated "a natural growth hormone" release and enhanced muscle growth. It has been marketed illegally under various names:

- **Gamma Hydroxybutyric Acid**
- **Sodium Oxybate**
- **Oxybutyrate**
- **Gamma-OH**
- **4-hydroxybuturate**
- **Gamma Hydrate**
- **Somsanit**
- **The Scoop**
- **Somatomax PM**

It was/is sold as a tablet, powder or liquid. Because of the amnesic effect, it has also been used as a "Date Rape" drug. GHB is considered a schedule II drug here in Florida.

GBL (Gammabutyrolactone) containing products are being marketed as orthomolecular compounds for sleep and the stimulation of growth hormones. GBL is metabolized to gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB) in humans. It has been marketed under various names:

- **Renewtrient**
- **Revivarant**
- **Revivarant G**
- **Blue Nitro**
- **Gamma G**
- **Remforce**
- **Regenerize**
- **Invigorate**

Current Status:

The use of GHB as a legitimate drug and nutritional supplement was discontinued due to side/adverse effects such as convulsions and heavy sedation. Its sale and use was banned in Florida and California in 1990. The use of GBL products has become popular recently due to the banning of the sale of GHB. GBL is essentially equivalent to GHB in its pharmacology and therefore should also be considered dangerous and unpredictable.

Toxic Dose:

The toxic dose is not very far from the "party" or abuse dose. Very small amounts (as small as 1/4 teaspoon) can be dangerous. If mixed with alcohol or other depressants, extreme sedation,

coma, respiratory depression/arrest and seizures can occur. There have been several deaths reported solely from exposure to GHB.

Clinical Effects:

Symptoms after therapeutic/toxic doses occur within 30 minutes with GHB, longer (3-5 hours) with GBL as it is converted to GHB. Symptoms of exposure include:

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Shallow/slow breathing
- Coma
- Amnesia
- Euphoria
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Loss of bowel/bladder control
- Bradycardia
- Hypotension
- Ataxia
- Uncontrollable shaking
- Seizure-like activity

Acute symptoms have resolved within 8 hours. Coma typically lasts 1 to 2 hours, with full recovery by 8 hours; dizziness may linger for up to 2 weeks.

Management:

GHB and GBL related effects require aggressive monitoring and symptomatic/supportive care in a health care facility.

- Stabilize vital signs--use standard procedures
- Maintain airway and breathing
- Seizure precautions
- No Gastrointestinal decontamination (e.g. ipecac/lavage/charcoal)
- Be prepared for rapid decline in mental status and vital functions
- There is no antidote for these products
- Transport to health care facility

Call the Florida Poison Information/Network for information and/or to report exposures.



1-800-222-1222

Florida Poison Information Center Network

Centers are located in Jacksonville, Tampa, & Miami

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