MANDRAX

The active ingredients of Mandrax are methaqualone (a sedative-hypnotic), and diphenhydramine (an antihistamine with prominent sedative-hypnotic effects).

Many illegal Mandrax tablets also contain benzodiazepines. Other adulterants may include barbiturates, ephedrine, meprobamate, meclizine, chlorpheniramine, sucrose and phencyclidine.

Methaqualone:

Methaqualone is completely metabolised in the liver, primarily by hydroxylation. At least 12 hydroxylated metabolites are excreted as conjugates in the liver. It is highly lipid soluble and undergoes slow biotransformation, characteristics which give it a relatively long plasma half life (10 – 43 hours).

Duration of detection: Methaqualone metabolites have been detected in the urine for up to 7 days (in exceptional cases even up to 21 days) following a single oral dose. It has also been detected in the blood up to 7 days, following a single oral dose.

Cross reactivity: Positive results for specimens containing other compounds structurally unrelated to methaqualone usually have not been observed.

Diphenhydramine:

Diphenhydramine is an antihistamine with an elimination half life of 4 – 8 hours. It undergoes extensive hepatic metabolism, with very little if any excreted as unchanged compound in the urine. The major metabolite, diphenylmethane, is inactive.

Adverse effects include sedation, sleepiness, dizziness, dyskinesias, psychotic reactions, seizures, photosensitivity, insomnia, tremors, nervousness, irritability, palpitations, blurred vision, urinary retention, constipation, and hypersensitivity.

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