



# Five Things That Can Turn Your Beach Vacation Into A Nightmare

*As the winter break approach, and millions of Americans plan for vacations to the beach, THELAW.TV asked Miami, Florida attorney John Elliot Leighton about the most common things that get people in trouble on beach vacations ... and land them in their lawyer's office when they get back.*

By Attorney John Elliott Leighton  
Special to THELAW.TV

When planning a vacation to the beach, families and groups of friends tend to be concerned with making sure the towels and beach chairs are packed, everyone has their swimsuit, and the cooler is stocked. But there is a lot more to think about, especially as tourists by their very nature are less attentive to dangers, because they are in a strange place and are focused on enjoying the surroundings. Below are five things to keep in mind that have the potential to turn a beach vacation into a nightmare.

## **1. Letting the party take over: drink spiking at bars and in restaurants**

When the party gets going and everyone lets down their guard, drinks can easily be spiked with "roofies" or GHB or other substances that cause amnesia and allow for sexual abuse and robbery. Never accept drinks from strangers and never let your drink out of your sight.

## **2. Resort pool drains that are defective or not properly maintained**

Many people have been killed or seriously injured when they or their hair/clothing have become entrapped in poorly designed or maintained pool and spa drains.

## **3. Sexual assault and rape by strangers who follow you to your room or obtain your key**

This can include a hotel employee. Never leave an extra key anywhere and always use chains and bars when inside the room. Try not act like a tourist: avoid carrying maps, asking for directions, or otherwise putting a target on your back. Do not give your room number out to anyone.

## **4. Water sport activities gone awry**

Parasailing and jet skiing can seem fun, but they are often under-regulated and can have catastrophic consequences when not properly operated. Most have no insurance and are not really run by the resorts themselves.

## **5. Medical care that causes harm**

Many resorts, particularly those in the islands, lack the level of medical care to which the first world has become accustomed. If there is any suggestion of a serious injury or illness, travelers should contact the U.S. Embassy and attempt to be evacuated to the United States or the closest major medical center.

Hopefully, most beach vacations will be the source of much enjoyment and create lasting good memories. However, it's still important to be aware of potential dangers and keep in mind the ways in which you can protect yourself.

*John Elliott Leighton is the managing partner of Leighton Law, P.A., a trial law firm with offices in Miami and Orlando. A board certified trial lawyer, his practice is focused on the representation of severely injured victims, primarily due to the failure to maintain reasonable or adequate security at commercial premises, Resort Torts™, medical malpractice, and consumer product liability. He is the author of the recent book, "Litigating Premises Security Cases."*