

** Information You Should Know As a Sexual Assault Survivor **

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault happens when you are forced into sexual contact against your will. It may be called a variety of names including rape, incest, molestation, sexual violence, marital rape, date rape or others. Sexual assault can happen to anyone, at anytime, anywhere. It is not your fault.

Sexual Assault is a Crime.

Perpetrators of sexual assault can be anyone; an acquaintance, date, relative, stranger, friend or spouse. Sexual assault is a crime of power, not lust, done to hurt and humiliate another.

Your Options: What to do if you have been sexually assaulted?

You have done the first thing to begin your recovery. You have come here to a safe place. The people here with you are here to help. If you have any questions at anytime, someone is available to answer your questions.

Making decisions after a sexual assault is often upsetting and confusing. In addition to making decisions about who to tell, you may be struggling with your medical and legal decisions. You have a right to have someone of your own choosing remain with you at all times during the law enforcement questioning and the medical exam.

If you are 18 years of age or older and are unsure, unwilling, or unable to participate in the standard reporting process to law enforcement, a nurse or clinician will discuss collecting an anonymous sexual assault evidence kit.

Medical Treatment — What to expect: To provide support and help you through this difficult time, a sexual assault advocate or social service staff person has been called and can stay with you through the medical exam if you so desire. This person can also explain procedures and options that are available to you. You can ask the person to leave at any time during your exam.

Paperwork

A nurse or a clinician will ask you some difficult and perhaps painful questions. These questions may include:

- ✘ Have you had sexual activity in the last five days?
- ✘ Do you know the person who raped or sexually assaulted you?
- ✘ Have you ever had voluntary sex with this person?
- ✘ Had you been using any drugs or alcohol?
- ✘ Are you currently using any birth control?

None of these questions are meant to imply that it is your fault. You are not to blame for this assault. These questions help document the circumstances and events in regard to the assault. They also help us provide the best medical care for you.

Sexual Assault Exam

After the paperwork is completed, a doctor, emergency room nurse or sexual assault nurse examiner will begin the evidence collection and medical exam. These will include:

- ✘ Asking you to undress. Your clothes will be kept as part of the evidence collection. If you did not bring any clothes with you to wear home, you may call a family member or a friend for additional clothes or tell us of your need for clothing.
- ✘ Checking for injuries. Depending upon your injuries, X-rays or photographs may be taken.
- ✘ Taking specimens from various areas of your body including from your fingernails, samples of pubic hair, swabbing the inside your mouth, your vagina for a woman or your penis for a man and anal area. This type of collection occurs with every rape exam.
- ✘ Given medicine to prevent infection for gonorrhea and chlamydia and being screened for Emergency Contraception Pills.
- ✘ Drawing blood.
- ✘ Being provided referrals to: Sexually Transmitted Infections testing (HIV/AIDS, syphilis), counselors and support services.

Remember you can choose whether or not to have these services. You can change your mind at anytime. If you have any questions at anytime, someone is available to answer your questions.

Legal Issues — You have choices!

In Ohio, the crime of rape and sexual assault is a felony offense. The hospital staff is required by Ohio law to call law enforcement (police or sheriff). Talking to the police/sheriff does not mean that you have to prosecute (go to trial). We encourage you to talk with the police/sheriff so that they will have on record the fact that this crime has taken place.

The police/sheriff may ask the same questions (as the doctor or nurse) as well as additional questions. This information will help them catch the assailant. They will want to know the time, date and location of where the assault occurred. None of these questions are meant to imply the assault was your fault.

Remember you have a right to decide if you talk to the police/sheriff. It is also your right to have someone of your own choosing remain with you at all times when you talk to the police. If you choose to report your assault, the evidence collected will be turned over to the police/sheriff.

On your *After-Care Information and Resources Sheet*, the name and telephone number of the police officer /sheriff will be written down. Having this enables you to phone them if you remember additional information or would like to know the status of your case.

Who will pay for this?

Neither you nor your health insurance should be billed for any costs associated with the sexual assault evidence collection or antibiotics. There may be charges to you for your medical injuries. If your health insurance does not cover this, you may be eligible for a refund through the Victims of Crime Compensation Program. If you are billed for this exam or if you would like more information about crime compensation, call the Sexual Abuse Forensic Examination (SAFE) program of the Ohio Attorney General at 1-800-582-2877 or 614-466-5610.

Resources:

We recognize that you may need help with this experience. Before you leave we will give you two hand-outs titled ***After Care Information and Resources and Caring for yourself: A Note to Survivors***. Other local services will be listed that may assist you. Below are some state and national resources. Always remember YOU ARE A SURVIVOR.

Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence: OAESV provides support and advocacy for the rights and need of survivors and co-survivors of sexual violence. 614-233-3301 (<http://www.oaev.org/>)

RAINN — Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network operates America's only National hotline for survivors — 1-800-656-HOPE. RAINN connects callers to the nearest rape crisis center that can provide emotional support and referral information (<http://www.rainn.org>).

☼ *Helping your Child: A Note to Parents and Caregivers* ☼

Common Reactions:

Learning that your child has been sexually abused can be one of the most painful and upsetting things that can happen in your life. Learning who abused your child can be also overwhelming. Conflicting loyalties can be an issue when the abuser is someone close to you or your child. You should not be surprised if your emotions bounce back and forth between wanting to run away and wanting to harm the person(s) who has hurt you and your child.

Here is a list of common feelings and reactions that children, youth and adults have reported:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ✘ Wondering "Why me?" | ✘ Disbelief | ✘ Difficulty sleeping |
| ✘ Fear | ✘ Shame | ✘ Guilt |
| ✘ Anger | ✘ Betrayal | ✘ Inability to concentrate |
| ✘ Rage | ✘ Sense of loss | ✘ Withdrawal |
| ✘ Numbness or emptiness | ✘ Loss of control | ✘ Panic |
| ✘ Stomach or headache | ✘ Nightmares | ✘ Reluctance to go to school/work |
| ✘ Regression | ✘ Agitation | ✘ Replay of the event |

All of these feelings and reactions are normal. It is important that you and your child have strong support to help you express and deal with these feelings. Looking out for your child and the rest of your family can be exhausting and overwhelming. You would not expect your child to deal with this alone, do not expect this of yourself. Don't be afraid to talk with someone about your feelings and experiences, particularly with someone trained in issues of sexual assault and rape.

Your child and family need you more than ever. Don't be afraid to reach out and hold and comfort them. Remember to respect their feelings and reactions. Give them and yourself space if needed.

Things you can do:

- ✘ Stay calm.
- ✘ Be patient. This is a difficult thing for your child to share with you.
- ✘ Take steps to ensure that your child is safe. Explain to her/him what you are doing.
- ✘ Let your child know that you are proud of her/him for having the courage to tell about the abuse.
- ✘ Listen to what your child is telling you, and believe her/him.
- ✘ Allow your child to talk about her/his fears. Come up with a plan to address them.
- ✘ Let your child see your feelings and tell them you are not upset about them, but with the person who did this to her/him.
- ✘ Create situations that will allow your child to feel in control and empowered.
- ✘ Show understanding about your child's physical complaints and reassure her/him that she/he is safe.
- ✘ Get help for your child to help lessen the trauma/grief that they may be experiencing.
- ✘ Get counseling for yourself. Don't be afraid to talk about your feelings and experiences.



Things you can say:

- ✘ Tell your child you believe her/him and thank her/him for trusting you enough to tell you about the abuse.
- ✘ Let your child know you will do everything in your power to keep her/him safe and make sure that this will not happen again.
- ✘ Let your child know that her/his reactions are normal/natural and that you will get through this hard time together.
- ✘ Tell your child it is not her/his fault and she/he is not responsible for what has happened.
- ✘ Explain that doctors, nurses, police and social workers care about children and want to help.
- ✘ Tell your child not to worry about you — it is your job to look after her/him.
- ✘ Let your child know she/he can come to you anytime.
- ✘ Tell your child you will always be there for her/him.
- ✘ Tell your child she/he is safe and that you will always do whatever you can to protect and take care of her/him.
- ✘ Be honest with your child about specific things that are happening.

What is Next?

Law Enforcement Investigation

Whether or not the abuser is prosecuted (goes to trial), a law enforcement officer (police or sheriff) or social worker may get in touch with you. You and your child will have an interview with someone who is trained in sexual abuse and assault investigation. The time and place of the interview will depend upon your child's physical and emotional condition. It will also depend upon the police department or children services' policies about follow-up interviews. You and your child will have to talk about the abuse again. If at anytime you or your child feels uncomfortable as to why a certain question is being asked, you have a right to ask why this question is being asked. Remember — you have a right to have someone of your choosing with you during police interviews.

If your child has been removed from her/his home for protective reasons, the juvenile court will decide if and when it is safe for the child to return. A social worker will be assigned to your child's case and will be in contact with you.

Follow-up Medical Care

The clinician will assess if your child is at risk for a sexually transmitted infection (e.g., Hepatitis B, Herpes, HIV/AIDS). If your child is found to be at risk for a sexually transmitted infection then you will be referred for additional testing. This will involve a blood test and another examination. These results will help you make future health choices for your child.

You can make appointments for these tests with your personal physician, local city or county health department, child health clinic, women's health center, hospital, or neighborhood health clinic. For free information about HIV/AIDS testing you may call 1/800/332-2437 (toll-free call). 800-332-3889 (TTY for the deaf and hearing impaired)

If there is reason to be concerned, issues related to possible pregnancy may also be discussed at a follow-up checkup.

Support Services

Allow you and your family enough time to heal. Don't be afraid to talk with someone about your feelings and experiences, particularly with a counselor or someone trained in issues of sexual assault and rape. They can also help you with medical and legal questions. No one in your family should have to go through this alone. Crisis counseling can make a difference.

Follow your inner feelings about the people you trust with your emotions. Don't be afraid to question what they say and how they act toward you or your family. Choose someone who will understand your experience and feelings. This person will allow you to take as much time as you need for you and your family's recovery.



Caring for Yourself: A Note to Survivors



Common Reactions:

Sexual assault or rape can be one of the most painful and upsetting things that can happen in someone's life. You should not be surprised if your emotions bounce back and forth between wanting to run away and wanting to harm the person(s) who hurt you.

Here is a list of common feelings and reactions that teens and adults have reported:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ✘ Wondering "Why me?" | ✘ Disbelief | ✘ Difficulty sleeping |
| ✘ Fear | ✘ Shame | ✘ Guilt |
| ✘ Anger | ✘ Betrayal | ✘ Inability to concentrate |
| ✘ Rage | ✘ Sense of loss | ✘ Withdrawal |
| ✘ Numbness or emptiness | ✘ Loss of control | ✘ Panic |
| ✘ Stomach or headache | ✘ Nightmares | ✘ Reluctance to go to school/work |

You may find yourself constantly thinking about the sexual assault or refusing to think about the assault. All of these feelings and reactions are normal. It is important that you have support to help you express and deal with these feelings. Don't be afraid to talk with someone about your feelings and experiences, particularly with someone trained in issues of sexual assault and rape.

With time and understanding, these feelings and experiences will subside.

Things you can do:

- ✘ Breathe. When we get scared, we stop normal breathing. Try to relax and take deep breaths.
- ✘ Honor your experiences. Appreciate yourself and your strength for having survived.
- ✘ Be patient with yourself. It takes time to heal feelings and emotions.
- ✘ Address immediate concerns, particularly medical and legal issues. Identify all your choices and options.
- ✘ Reassure yourself. These feelings are natural. Many people who suffer from a trauma feel this way.
- ✘ Find healing helpers. Look for people (therapist, clergy, and friends) who can guide, support and coach your healing.
- ✘ Go to a support group for survivors. Survivors are wonderful allies. It is very powerful to share your healing journey with others who understand what you are going through. Contact your local rape crisis center for a support group nearest you.
- ✘ Educate yourself. Read books or contact your local rape crisis center to get information about the common myths and misconceptions surrounding sexual assault.
- ✘ Be aware of people and places that make you feel unsafe. Seek help in creating a safety plan that addresses your needs and concerns. A good self-defense class should provide verbal and physical defense skills in an affirming and supportive atmosphere.

What is Next?

Law Enforcement Investigation

Whether or not the perpetrator is prosecuted (goes to trial), a law enforcement officer (police or sheriff) may get in touch with you. The time and place of the interview will depend upon your physical and emotional condition. It will also depend upon the police department policies about follow-up interviews. You will have to talk about the assault again. If at any time you feel uncomfortable as to why a certain question is being asked, you have a right to ask why this question is being asked. Remember — you have a right to have someone of your choosing (friend, rape crisis advocate or victim witness advocate) with you during the police interview in the hospital and to request this as the investigation progresses.

Follow-up Medical Care

Because not all injuries show up right away, do not be surprised if you discover additional bruising over the next day or two. If this happens, call the police officer who is handling your case. They may want to take additional pictures.

You did not receive any testing for sexually transmitted infections (STI) during your sexual assault exam. The doctor or nurse may advise you to be checked for STIs (Hepatitis B, Herpes, and HIV/AIDS) two to three weeks after the sexual assault exam. The second checkup will involve a blood test and another examination. These results will help you make future health choices.

You can make appointments for these tests with your personal physician, local city or county health department, STI clinic, women's health center, hospital or neighborhood health clinic. For free information about HIV/AIDS testing, you may call 1-800-332-2437 (toll-free call). 1-800-332-3889 (TTY for the deaf and hearing impaired)

- ✘ **For women:** At the hospital or clinic, you may have been given a base line pregnancy test to determine if you were pregnant at the time of the assault. Only one percent of rape survivors become pregnant as a result of the attack. However, if you are concerned about issues related to possible pregnancy, contact your health care provider. A urine pregnancy test is recommended three weeks after your assault.
- ✘ You were also screened to see if Emergency Contraception was safe for you. Emergency Contraception is not 100 percent effective. If you have not had a period within three weeks after your sexual assault exam call your health care provider. If you do not have a health care provider, you can make an appointment with your local city or county health department, women's health center or neighborhood health clinic.

Support Services

Allow yourself enough time to heal. Do not be afraid to talk with someone about your feelings and experiences, particularly with someone trained in issues of sexual assault and rape. They can also help you with medical and legal questions. No one should have to go through this alone. Crisis counseling can make a difference.

Follow your inner feelings about the people you trust with your emotions. Do not be afraid to question what they say and how they act towards you or your family. Choose someone who will understand your experience and feelings. This person will allow you to take as much time as you need for your recovery.

Who will pay for this?

Neither you nor your health insurance should be billed for any costs associated with this sexual assault exam for evidence collection. If you have received injuries as a result of the sexual assault you may be charged for the treatment. If your health insurance does not cover this, you may be eligible for a refund through the Victims of Crime Compensation Program. The Victims of Crime Compensation Program can also cover other out of pocket costs linked to your assault. If you are billed for this exam or if you would like more information about crime compensation, call the Sexual Abuse Forensic Examination (SAFE) program of the Ohio Attorney General Office at 1-800-582-2877 or 614-466-5610.

Additional Information about Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)

It is impossible to tell right away after a sexual assault if you have been infected with any STI. Tests for STI need to be done at a later date to get reliable results. A checkup is recommended two to three weeks after your sexual assault exam.

Some of the diseases that you should be tested for include: chlamydia, gonorrhea, HIV (AIDS virus) and syphilis. These diseases may show very few symptoms and blood tests are needed to determine if you have any. Other infections should be tested for only if symptoms develop. Even if you took medicine to prevent STIs and see no sign of infection, see your health care provider for a follow-up exam.

Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis

Testing for chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis can all be done at the same time during the follow-up exam. All three of these common STI's are fairly easy to cure with antibiotics. Also you may not notice any signs showing that you are infected. It is important to get a follow-up exam.

- ✘ **For Women:** If you notice you have any of these signs — chronic itching, vaginal discharge, abdominal pain, bleeding between periods, heavier bleeding for a long time, fever — call your health care provider.
- ✘ **For Men:** If you notice you have any of these signs — discharge from your penis, burning or itching sensation during urination, frequency in urination, a painless lesion (sore) — call your health care provider.

Genital Herpes and Genital Warts

Tests for genital herpes and genital warts can be done when signs appear. Genital herpes may show signs soon after the assault, but genital warts may take as long as three months to appear. In both men and women, genital herpes starts out looking like a pimple or blister and turns into painful sores. Genital warts are slow growing and painless tissue. Some strains do not have any visible signs. If you notice any of these signs – call your health care provider. It is important for women to have an annual pap smear to detect genital warts.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is an STI that is often not tested for. It may take up to six months or longer for signs to appear. Signs may include: nausea, weight loss, headache, fever, dark urine, feeling sick or run down, abdominal pain or cramping (without a menstrual period) and yellowing skin and eyes. Talk to your health care provider about testing for Hepatitis B.

HIV/AIDS

AIDS is caused by a virus called HIV. You may want to have an initial test for HIV antibodies. The test detects if you have been exposed to HIV. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people with HIV develop antibodies against the virus within three months after infection. CDC studies indicate that it is highly unlikely that it would take longer than six months for HIV antibodies to be detectable during tests.

If your initial test is negative, it should be repeated two more times — three months and six months after the assault. If a follow-up test is positive, this may help you prove that you may have been exposed to HIV as a result of the assault.

- ✂ **Anonymous vs. Confidential Testing:** There are two ways to test for HIV. You have a right to choose which way is right for you.
 - o **Anonymous testing** means your name is not linked to your blood sample. People who choose the anonymous test are given a number code to bring back or are asked to call at a specific time to get the test result.
 - o **Confidential testing** means your name is linked to your blood sample. The test results are protected to a certain extent by state laws, agency policies and staff commitment to confidentiality. The test results may become part of your permanent medical record.

Until you know you are HIV negative, you should take protective measures such as not having sexual intercourse; wearing a male or female condom; or not donating blood, semen and body organs. For free information about HIV/AIDS and testing, you may call 1/800/332-2437 (toll free call) 800-332-3889 (TTY for the deaf and hearing impaired). For information about HIV/AIDS in Ohio on the Web see: <http://www.catf.net/HOTLINE.html>

✿ After Care Information and Resources ✿

You have been scheduled — or should make an appointment — for the following kind of care

	Where	Date	Time	Phone
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up medical exam				
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up check for infection				
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up pregnancy test				
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up counseling				
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing for STI				
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing for HIV				
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:				

Other important names and numbers that may be helpful to you:

Rape Crisis Center:	Phone:
Child Advocacy Center or Child Abuse Clinic	
Detective's Name:	Phone:
Police/Sheriff Department Name:	Kit ID Number:
<p>Anonymous Kit - If you did not sign for the release of your name to law enforcement (police or sheriff), you should be told the evidence collected today will be saved. You should be told how long it will be kept before being destroyed. (Date will be destroyed: _____)</p> <p>Please contact law enforcement officer (see above) if you would like to make a full report in your name by presenting your Kit ID Number _____.</p>	
Name of Hospital:	
Hospital Social Services:	Phone:
Mental Health Center:	Phone:
Victim Witness Program:	Phone:
<p>Rape Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) — A 24-hour computer system that will relay your call to the nearest rape crisis center. 1-800-656-Hope (toll-free call) (http://www.rainn.org)</p>	
<p>Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence — OAESV provides support and advocacy for the rights and need of survivors and co-survivors of sexual violence. 614-233-3301 (http://www.oaevs.org/)</p>	
<p>Prevent Child Abuse Ohio — Provides statewide education and resources on child sexual assault – 1-800-244-5373 (toll-free call). (http://www.preventchildabuse.org)</p>	
<p>Ohio AIDS Hotline — Information about free testing — 1-800-332-2437 (toll-free call) 800-332-3889 (TTY for the deaf and hearing impaired)</p>	
<p>Attorney General's Crime Victim Compensation Program — 1-800-582-2877 (toll-free call) online forms are available at: http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/ (Click on Services on menu)</p>	

Place label here that includes Hospital Name,
Address, Telephone and Emergency Department
Contact

Document of Care

Date:	
Name of Patient:	Patient Number:
Examiner:	Examiner's Phone:

Before you sign, be sure you understand the information below. If you have any questions, we will be happy to talk about them.

With your consent, evidence was collected from you should this case be prosecuted (go to trial). Additional tests and treatments were done as follows:

<input type="checkbox"/> I received the following tests:	
<input type="checkbox"/> A pregnancy test – Results:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Results:

For Children only: Your child received the following tests:	
<input type="checkbox"/> A blood test for syphilis infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Test(s) for HIV antibody
<input type="checkbox"/> Test(s) for gonorrhea infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Test(s) for a pre-existing pregnancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Test(s) for chlamydia infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Other tests:

<input type="checkbox"/> I was given the following medications to prevent gonorrhea/chlamydia	
Medication:	Dosage:
Medication:	Dosage:
Medication:	Dosage:
<input type="checkbox"/> I was not given this treatment because:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I was given emergency contraception to prevent pregnancy.	
Medication:	Dosage:
<input type="checkbox"/> I was given a fact sheet about emergency contraception	
<input type="checkbox"/> I was given medication to prevent vomiting.	Dosage:
Medication:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I was not given emergency contraception because:	
<input type="checkbox"/> There is no risk of pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> I did not want it
<input type="checkbox"/> Of a pre-existing pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Too long an interval had elapsed
Other reasons:	

<input type="checkbox"/> I was given the following hand-outs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Information You Should Know As A Sexual Assault Survivor ✨	
<input type="checkbox"/> Helping Your Child: A Note to Parents and Caregivers ✨	
<input type="checkbox"/> Caring for Yourself: A Note to Survivors 🌻	
<input type="checkbox"/> After-Care Information and Resources 🌻	
<input type="checkbox"/> I did not wish any or all of these hand-outs	

Patient/Guardian Signature:	Date:
Examiner Signature:	Date: