

## Sexual assault is

any unwanted or forced sexual act and includes:

- Rape and attempted rape
- Unwanted touching or groping
- Sexual harassment
- Unwanted showing of private parts
- Sexual exploitation
- Child sexual abuse
- Incest
- Sexually obscene communications (in person, by phone, texting, email or social networking)

## One in six women

will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime. Many do not report their assault because they are threatened by their offender or they feel that it was somehow their fault. You **DID NOT** deserve to be sexually assaulted, but you **DO** deserve help and support.

### RAPE CRISIS & RECOVERY CENTERS

#### Allegany

Family Crisis Resource Center  
301-759-9244

#### Anne Arundel

Sexual Assault Crisis Center  
410-222-7273

#### Baltimore City

TurnAround, Inc.  
410-828-6390

#### Baltimore County

TurnAround, Inc.  
410-828-6390

#### Calvert

Crisis Intervention Center  
410-535-1121 / 301-855-1075

#### Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot

For All Seasons, Inc.  
410-820-5600,  
toll free 1-800-310-7273

#### Carroll

Rape Crisis Intervention Service, 410-857-7322

#### Cecil

Rape Crisis Program-Cecil County DSS, 410-996-0333

#### Charles

Center for Abused Persons  
301-645-3336

#### Frederick

Heartly House, Inc.  
301-662-8800

#### Garrett

Dove Center  
301-334-9000

#### Harford

Sexual Assault/Spouse Abuse Resource Center (SARC)  
410-836-8430

#### Howard

Domestic Violence Center  
410-997-2272

#### Montgomery

Victim Assistance & Sexual Assault Program  
240-777-4357

#### Prince George's

DV/SA Center, Dimensions Healthcare  
301-618-3154

#### St. Mary's

Walden-Sierra, Inc.  
301-863-6661

#### Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester

Life Crisis Center, Inc.  
410-749-4357

#### Washington

CASA, Inc.  
301-739-8975

### RESOURCES

#### Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI)

www.mcasa.org  
301-565-2277 or toll-free 1-877-496-SALI (7254)

#### Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)

www.rainn.org  
1-800-656-HOPE (4673) 24 hours a day. 7 days a week.



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Preparation of this document was supported by grant number 2009-ES-56-0005, awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice and grant number VAWA-2010-1020, awarded by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.

# what to do

## AFTER A SEXUAL ASSAULT



## A sexual assault is never your fault

and it is important that you know help is always available to you. Sexual assault can happen to anyone, at any time. It doesn't matter how old you are, what you look like, what you wear, where you hang out and who you hang out with.

Offenders can be strangers, but most likely they are friends, family members or acquaintances that we think we can trust. Sexual assaults may involve a weapon, threats, coercion, alcohol or drugs, or nothing but the violent attack itself.





## What to Do if You Have Been Sexually Assaulted

### Seek out a friend or other support person.

You may feel confused and not sure what to do. Call someone you trust who will offer you emotional support and help you understand your options.

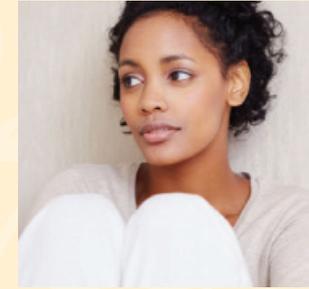
### Call your local Rape Crisis and Recovery Center.

Trained hotline staff is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer questions or just listen. Your call is FREE and always confidential. Hotline staff can offer options and help identify what is best for you.

**Get medical attention.** Whether you have cuts and bruises or not, getting medical attention is very important. Maryland offers Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) programs at various hospitals. Visit [www.mcasa.org](http://www.mcasa.org) for a list of Maryland SAFE Programs. A FREE exam can be completed even if you choose not to involve the police. Try not to shower, clean yourself, or urinate after an attack, but even if you have, don't let that stop you from getting to a hospital as soon as possible.

At the hospital, you can ask that an advocate from a Rape Crisis and Recovery Center be with you. Your advocate is there to support you and answer any questions you may have. You can also ask to have your advocate with you during the exam.

During the exam, the nurse will look for things that might identify the attacker, such as hairs, fibers and body fluids. The exam may include oral swabbing and photographs of visible injuries. An internal exam may be conducted on adolescent and adult women. You may be asked to give blood and hair samples. You may be given preventative treatment for sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs).



You may also be given emergency contraception (EC) if there is a risk of pregnancy from the assault. EC contains hormones like those found in birth control pills. They can prevent pregnancy when taken within 72 hours of sexual intercourse. EC is safe and effective in reducing the chance of pregnancy.

**Report the assault to police.** Your advocate or another support person can go with you to file a report in the county where you were assaulted. For investigative purposes, the sooner you report the sexual assault the better.

The police will ask you questions, some of which may be difficult to answer, but it is important that you answer them fully and honestly. Telling the police about your sexual assault is difficult, but many survivors say that bringing their attacker to justice helped them to heal.

## What to Expect After You Have Been Sexually Assaulted

Everyone is different and there is no single reaction to being sexually assaulted, but it is important to know that you may experience:

- Nervousness and anxiety
- Fear and social isolation
- A decrease or increase in appetite
- Sleeplessness or nightmares
- Depression and withdrawal
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Relationship problems
- Flashbacks
- Physical ailments, headaches, stomach aches and other pain
- Thoughts of suicide

**Take care of yourself.** When you are ready, trained counselors are available at your local Rape Crisis and Recovery Center. Many survivors find that counseling helps them to move forward and heal. In addition to counseling, there are ways that you can take care of yourself following a sexual assault:

- Talk with a supportive friend, family member or spiritual advisor
- Keep a written journal
- Express yourself through art, dance or music
- Exercise, get plenty of sleep and eat healthy
- Join a local support group
- Pray or meditate
- Realize that you are not alone nor to blame
- Be kind to yourself
- Set a path and goals for healing and reward your progress

## Victim's Rights in Maryland When Seeking Medical Attention

You have the right to:

- Be considered an emergency patient with special needs
- Speak with police and medical personnel
- A forensic medical exam even if you choose **not** to involve the police
- Be taken to a quiet, private area for a medical/forensic examination
- Be informed about and offered emergency contraception, if there is a risk of pregnancy
- Have initial and follow-up tests performed if there is a risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and be offered medication
- Be informed about HIV/AIDS testing and be referred to free, confidential testing
- Have all injuries treated

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