

Reducing Risk

- Always be FIRM when you tell someone what you do or don't want. No always means No: speak clearly, make eye contact, and don't worry about being polite or nice.
- Plan ahead when going out - carry a cell phone, have your own transportation or money, use a buddy system, stay in groups.
- Don't leave a drink unattended.
- Bars may have signage posted in women's restrooms on how to ask for help. Ordering an "angel shot" is code for needing assistance if you are being followed, harassed, drugged, etc..
- Don't give out your home address, keep doors/cars locked.
- Be aware of your surroundings, if you feel unsafe get somewhere safe ASAP.

How to Help Victims

- Believe the victim unconditionally. Accept what you hear without judgment.
- Reinforce to the victim that it is not their fault. Don't ask "why" questions, such as "Why were you there at that time?" that suggest they are at fault.
- You cannot control how the victim feels or fix the problem. Do not suggest that the victim "move on" with their life and forget about the rape.
- Be a good listener & be patient. Let the victim know you are there when they are ready to talk.
- Help the victim regain a sense of control over their life. Support their decisions and choices and assist by presenting options or resources.
- Respect the victim's need for privacy.
- Respect the victim's decision whether or not to report the assault to the police.

It's NOT Your Fault

"No" always means No.

Regardless of how a person might be dressed, if a person might be drinking or using drugs, that person does not need to carry any guilt or shame. We are here to help any and all individuals experiencing sexual violence.

National Sexual Assault Hotline
Call: 800.656.HOPE (4673)

HELP Is Available

- Trained advocates that will BELIEVE and SUPPORT you.
- Culturally-Specific Support
- Referrals to South Asian Resources
- Language Assistance

SEWA-AIFW

24/7 CRISIS LINE
952-912-9100

6645 James Ave N
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430
763-234-8301
info@sewa-aifw.org
sewa-aifw.org | @sewaaifwmn



SEWA-AIFW

Sexual Assault Myths & Prevention

Sexual Assault
CAN happen to ANYONE

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the consent of the recipient. Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced, coerced, or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity. Sexual Assault can include:

- Unwanted touching.
- Rape: unwanted vaginal, oral, or anal penetration by an object or body part.
- Unwanted, painful or degrading acts during sexual/intimate activities.
- Taking advantage when a person is drunk or unable to give consent.
- Denying contraception or protection against sexually transmitted diseases.
- Taking sexual photos/film without consent.
- Forced performance of sexual acts for money.
- Making threats if sex is refused

Types of Rape

- **Date rape** is forced or coerced sex within a dating relationship.
- **Statutory rape** is sexual intercourse between a person who is under the age of 16 and a person who is 3 or more years older, or in a position of authority over the child, with or without consent.
- **Marital Rape** is non-consensual sex in which the perpetrator is the victim's spouse
- **"Corrective" Rape** is a hate crime in which a person is raped (due to their gender identity or sexual orientation) to "correct" a person to be heterosexual and/or enforce conformity with gender stereotypes.

Myths & Misconceptions

Myth: Sexual assault is an act of passion that can't be controlled; men cannot stop once they are aroused.

Fact: Sexual assault is about power & control, not motivated by sexual gratification, and either party can stop at any time during intimacy.

Myth: If a victim does not fight back, it wasn't rape or they wanted it; there should be signs of a struggle.

Fact: Many survivors freeze during an assault and cannot move or speak. In most assaults, physical force is not used & there are no visible injuries.

Myth: Women lie about being raped for attention.

Fact: Only 2-8% of rapes are falsely reported, same percentage as for other felonies.

Myth: A person cannot sexually assault their spouse.

Fact: Nearly 1 in 10 women have been raped by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Myth: Men are not victims of sexual violence.

Fact: 1.5% of men have been sexually assaulted.

Myth: The victim is "asking for it" if they wear revealing clothing, behave provocatively, or drink.

Fact: A victim's behavior or clothing does not mean they consent to sexual activity.

Myth: If a parent teaches a child to stay away from strangers they won't get raped.

Fact: 92% of juvenile victims know the perpetrator; 8 of 10 rape victims know the assaulter.

Myth: A woman can't be raped by a woman, nor a man by a man; a transgender person can't be raped by a partner.

Fact: Any time a person has sex without someone's consent, that is rape. Forcible sexual acts can occur between any two people, including LGBTQ people.

What To Do

- Seek immediate medical attention.
- If you are able to, try to avoid activities that could potentially damage evidence such as: bathing, showering, using the bathroom, changing clothes, combing hair, washing hands, cleaning up, brushing teeth, etc.
- Reach out to friends/family or a crisis service center for assistance.
- Keep a change of clothes with you if you go to the hospital or police station.
- Find a safe place to stay

What To Expect

During a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (Rape Kit)

- An exam may take a few hours, call for support or an advocate during this time.
- **Immediate care** will be given to attend to injuries.
- **History.** Questions about medications, pre-existing conditions, and health history will be asked. Some questions ensure that DNA and other evidence collected from the exam can be connected to the perpetrator. Questions about the details of what happened to help identify areas of injury as well as where evidence may be found.
- **Head-to-toe exam.** This may include a full body examination, including internal examinations of the mouth, vagina, and/or anus. May also include samples of blood, urine, swabs of body surface areas, and sometimes hair samples. The professional performing the exam may take pictures to document injuries and the examination. They may also collect items of clothing.
- **Possible mandatory reporting.** The person performing the exam may be obligated to report it to law enforcement if the victim is a minor.
- **Follow up care.** Treatment for STIs, other medical care, or counseling may be recommended.