

How can I protect myself from being sexually assaulted?

There are things you can do to reduce your chances of being sexually assaulted. Follow these tips from the National Crime Prevention Council:

- Be aware of your surroundings – who's out there and what's going on.
- Walk with confidence. The more confidence you have, the stronger you appear.
- Do not let alcohol or drugs cloud your judgment.
- Be assertive – don't let anyone violate your space.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable, leave.
- Do not prop open self-locking doors.
- Lock your door and windows, even if you leave for just a minute.
- Watch your keys. Do not lend them. Do not lose them and do not put your name and/or address on the key ring.
- Watch for unwanted visitors. Know who is on the other side of the door before you answer it.

- Be aware of isolated spots like underground garages, offices with after business hours and apartment laundry rooms.
- Avoid walking or jogging alone, especially at night. Vary your route and stay in well traveled, well lit areas.
- Have your key ready to use before you reach the door – home, car or work.
- Park in well lit areas.
- Drive on well traveled streets with doors and windows locked.
- Never hitchhike or pick up a hitchhiker.
- Keep your car in good shape with plenty of gas in the tank.
- In case of trouble, call for help on your cellular phone. If you don't have a phone, put the hood up, lock the doors and put a banner in the rear window that says, "Help, Call Police."



Sexual Assault



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1-800-611-6349

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault and abuse is any type of sexual activity you do not agree too, including:

- Inappropriate touching
- Vaginal, anal or oral penetration
- Sexual intercourse that you say 'no' to
- Rape
- Attempted rape
- Child molestation

Sexual assault can be verbal, visual or anything that forces a person to join in unwanted sexual contact or attention. Examples of this are voyeurism (when someone watches private sexual acts), exhibitionism (when someone exposes him/herself in public) and sexual harassment. It can happen in different situations by a stranger in an isolated place, on a date or at home by someone you know.



Rape is a common form of sexual assault. It is committed in many different situations; on a date, by a friend, acquaintance or when you think that you are alone.

Educate yourself on "date rape" drugs. They can be slipped into a drink when the victim isn't looking. Never leave your drink unattended – no matter where you are. Try to always be aware of your surroundings. Date rape drugs make a person unable to resist assault and can cause memory loss so the victim doesn't know what happened.

What to do if you've been sexually assaulted

- Get away from the attacker to a safe place as fast as you can. Then call 911 or the police.
- Call a friend or family member that you trust. You can also call a crisis center or a hotline to talk with a counselor. The Northeast Crisis Line is 1-866-611-6349. Feelings of shame, guilt, fear and shock are normal. It is important to get counseling from a trusted professional.

- Do not wash, comb or clean any part of your body. Do not change clothes if possible, so the hospital staff can collect evidence. Do not touch or change anything at the scene of the assault.
- Go to your nearest hospital emergency room as soon as possible. You need to be examined, treated for any injuries and screened for possible sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) or pregnancy. The doctor will collect evidence using a rape kit for fibers, hairs, saliva, semen or clothing that the attacker may have left behind.
- You or the hospital staff can call the police from the emergency room to file a report.
- Ask the hospital staff about possible support groups you can attend right away.

