

Immediate Help if You've Been Sexually Assaulted

(Published by the Rape Treatment Center Santa Monica, UCLA Medical Center and adapted for the CABRILLO COLLEGE community)

- Go to a safe place
- If you want to report the assault, notify the police or campus security immediately (to reach the Cabrillo Sheriff's Officer call 212-8464 or 911 twenty-four hours a day). Reporting the crime can help you regain a sense of personal power and control and can also help to ensure the safety of other potential victims.
- Call a friend, a family member, or someone else you trust and ask her or him to stay with you.
- Preserve all physical evidence of the assault. Do not shower, bathe, douche, or brush your teeth. Save all of the clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault. Place each item of clothing in a separate paper bag. Do not use plastic bags. Do not disturb anything in the area where the assault occurred.
- Go to a hospital emergency department or a specialized forensic clinic that provides medical care for sexual assault victims. Those in the North County area are encouraged to go to Dominican Hospital Emergency Department (462-7700) for medical care and evidence collection 24 hours a day. In South County, services are available around the clock through Watsonville Hospital Emergency Department. A counselor will be available to you at that time. Even if you think you don't have physical injuries, you should still have a medical examination and discuss with a health care provider the risk of exposure to sexually transmitted diseases and the possibility of pregnancy resulting from the sexual assault. You will not be required to report the sexual assault to the police in order to receive medical care at the hospital. The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's office can transport to the hospital. A female officer will be provided to accompany you whenever possible.
- If you suspect that you may have been given a rape drug, ask the hospital or clinic where you receive medical care to take urine sample. The urine sample should be preserved as evidence. Rape drugs, such as Rohypnol and GHB, are more likely to be detected in urine than in blood.
- Write down as much as you can remember about the circumstances of the assault, including a description of the assailant.

- Talk with a counselor who is trained to assist rape victims about the emotional and physical impacts of the assault. Defensa de Mujeres-Women's Crisis Support has staff members available to provide counseling, advocacy and referrals to medical, legal and other support services. There are also specially trained therapists available at Defensa de Mujeres-Women's Crisis Support.
- If you do not live in the Santa Cruz area, but want information about legal issues, medical care, or other concerns related to the assault, a rape treatment center or a rape hot line can assist you. One national victim assistance agency is called RAINN and they can be contacted by calling 1-800-656-HOPE. They will connect you with a rape crisis center in your area.