

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Most sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows – not by strangers.
- Sexual assault is a form of abuse used in many relationships.
- One out of every four women in the U.S. have said that they have been physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner at some point in their lives.
- The effects of sexual assault can include: depression, flashbacks, anxiety, nightmares and changes in sleeping and eating patterns if you don't seek help through counseling.
- It is estimated that over 32,000 pregnancies result from sexual assault each year.
- Men who sexually assault and batter their partners are more likely to cause severe injuries. The violence can potentially escalate and lead to your death.
- Submitting to sexual assault does not mean that you consent to it.
- You do not have to have major injuries (such as broken bones, loss of blood, bruises) to have been sexually assaulted.
- Crime Victims Board reimbursement allows hospitals to be reimbursed for care given to victims following a sexual assault, even if the victim does not have medical coverage.
- **It is the policy of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) not to ask about the immigration status of crime victims, witnesses or others who call or approach the police seeking assistance.**

This project was supported by Grant No. 2001-WE-BX-0006 awarded by the Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## HOW TO GET HELP

- **Call the police at 911.** Sexual assault is a crime. Police can help you get medical care if necessary and will refer your case to someone in the Special Victims Squad. Officers in this squad are specially trained to respond sensitively to victims of sexual assault.
- **Go to the hospital.** The hospital can document and treat injuries. Going to the doctor may be easier if someone goes with you. New York City hospitals also have sexual assault experts on staff who can help you through the process.
- **Call one of the hotlines listed below.** The agency you call may answer the phone in English. If you do not speak English, say in English the name of the language you speak. It will help them find a translator for you.

### Important Numbers

**Emergencies dial 911 (all-languages, toll-free)**  
**Other City services dial 311 (all-languages, toll-free)**

#### NYPD Special Victims Liaison Unit

English, Spanish, 24 hours 212-267-RAPE (7273)

#### Rape/Sexual Assault/Incest Hotline

All-languages, 24 hours 212-227-3000

#### NYC Domestic Violence Hotline

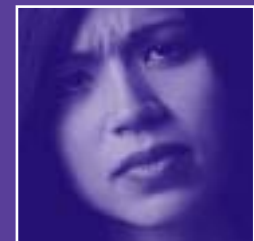
All-languages, toll-free, 24 hours 1-800-621-HOPE (4673)

TDD, toll-free, 24 hours 1-800-810-7444



**Michael R. Bloomberg**, Mayor  
**Raymond W. Kelly**, Commissioner  
New York City Police Department  
**Yolanda B. Jimenez**, Commissioner  
Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence

# WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED



## WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

**S**exual assault is when anyone by force, threat of force or while you are unable to consent (for example, you are less than 17 years old or unconscious):

- has sexual intercourse with you; has contact with or penetrates your vagina, mouth or rectum – even slightly
- touches your intimate parts (breasts, buttocks and groin), either over or under clothing
- makes you touch someone else's intimate parts, either over or under clothing
- puts their finger or foreign objects into your vagina, urethra, penis or rectum

**It is against the law to commit any of these acts in the United States. If anyone has done this to you, there are people who can help you recover.**

No one – not even your husband or partner – has the right to touch your body unless you want them to.

**You are not to blame – no one provokes sexual assault.**

## MYTHS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT

Myth: You can't be sexually assaulted by your husband or boyfriend.

**Fact: Many offenders are married to or involved in relationships with their victims. Sexual assault can be committed by anyone.**

Myth: Unwanted sex or fondling is not a big deal.

**Fact: Sexual assault is a serious crime. People can suffer short and long term physical, psychological and emotional consequences after being sexually assaulted.**

Myth: People who wear revealing clothes deserve to be sexually assaulted.

**Fact: No one deserves to be sexually assaulted. Men and women of all ages, races, classes, religions, professions and style of dress have been sexually assaulted.**

Myth: No one can be sexually assaulted against his or her will.

**Fact: Fear and threats of violence can immobilize anyone.**

Myth: I didn't fight back so it wasn't rape or sexual assault.

**Fact: Any forced sexual act is considered sexual assault – regardless of whether the person fought back.**

Myth: Filing a report will get the offender arrested.

**Fact: In order for an arrest to be made, in most cases the police and Assistant District Attorneys will need you to cooperate.**

Myth: There is no help available if I am not a U.S. citizen.

**Fact: There are many services, such as legal and counseling services, available for citizens and non-citizens. Call the all-language, 24 hour Sexual Assault Hotline (212-227-3000) or the NYPD Special Victims Liaison Unit (212-267-7273) for help. Specially trained female officers who understand all types of sexual assault will kindly help you. All calls are kept confidential.**

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Call the police at 911.** They will take you to a hospital where your injuries can be treated and evidence of the assault can be collected if possible. Your case will be assigned to someone in the Special Victims Squad. Officers in this squad are specially trained to respond sensitively to victims of sexual assault.
- **Seek medical attention as soon as possible if you have been assaulted.** A doctor can treat your injuries, any sexually transmitted infections that you may have contracted and prevent an unwanted pregnancy. You will be examined in private with no police officer present. If you think you were given drugs before the sexual assault, a urine and blood sample must be taken as soon as possible.
- **DON'T clean up, shower, brush your teeth, comb your hair, wash your hands or throw away any clothing.** It is important to allow the examiner to collect evidence of the assault. Your cooperation may keep this from happening to anyone else.
- **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** Don't hesitate to ask the police or medical staff to explain everything to you. They are there to help you.
- **Consider professional counseling or support.** Having someone to talk to about what happened and how you are feeling may help you deal with the effects of sexual assault. Call the Sexual Assault Hotline for a referral to a local agency.
- **Consider your legal rights and know what services are available to you.** Once you call 911, the police will help you make a report, get medical assistance and refer you to counseling resources. Remember that sexual assault is a crime regardless of your relationship to the perpetrator.