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## What Can Men Do?

- **Be aware of language.** Words are powerful. It is common in our society for words to be used that put women down, such as when a woman is referred to as a “whore,” “slut,” “dog,” “bitch,” or other degrading and inappropriate terms. Such language sends a message that women are inferior and it becomes easier to treat them with less respect, disregard their rights, and ignore their well-being.
- **Speak up.** Talk with other men when you hear attitudes, jokes, and language or see behaviors that are degrading toward women and promote the concept that it’s okay to rape. Talk with women about risk reduction strategies. Talk with men about rape prevention.
- **Communicate.** Talk honestly and openly about sex. Effective and clear communication about your desires, listening to your partner, and asking when situations are unclear enables men to make sex safer for themselves and others.
- **Don’t ever have sex with anyone against their will.** Although most men never rape, the overwhelming majority of rapists are males. Be the kind of man who values equality and treats others with respect. Don’t be one who uses his strength to hurt others.

## Resources

STAR Central (Mon – Fri, 8 am – 5 pm)	575-7252
SARPA (24 hour response line)	927-1020
CAPS 24 hr Emergency Line (Counseling & Psychological Services)	575-5276
UA Women’s Clinic	575-4478
Pat Walker Health Center (University Health Services)	575-4451
University Police	575-2222
Police/Ambulance	911
Washington Regional Medical Center	442-1000
Northwest Medical Center	751-5711
Peace at Home Family Shelter	442-9811
The Crisis Center	756-2337

**STAR Central of the Pat Walker Health Center's Health Promotion Department is the Office of Support, Training, Advocacy, and Resources on Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence. Confidential advocacy services and campus training programs are available. Visit <http://health.uark.edu> for more information or to learn about STAR Central's peer education program, RESPECT, visit <http://respect.uark.edu>**

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# Sexual Assault: Reducing the Risk

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## STAR Central

*Office of Support, Training,  
Advocacy, and Resources on Sexual  
Assault and Relationship Violence*



**Pat Walker Health Center  
Office 277  
(479) 575-7252  
TTY (479) 575-4124**



Rape is often viewed as a women's issue, but it really is a community issue. Rape is a violent crime that affects all, no matter age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, level of education, or economic status. The effects of rape affect not only the victims, but also those who care about the individuals who are raped.

By being aware, a person can reduce some personal risk of rape. Certain behaviors and strategies can be used to decrease the likelihood of a rape. However, even if all of the strategies are followed, it is still possible for a rape to occur because a person can only control their own behaviors and actions and not the decisions, behaviors, and actions of another.

It should always be remembered that if a rape does occur, it is not the victim's fault. A victim should never be blamed for the fact that someone else chose to overpower or take advantage of a situation. Rather, blame should be placed where it belongs. That is, offenders of sexual assault and rape should be held accountable for their choices and actions.

**People can take steps to help reduce the risk of being raped. However, rape will only truly stop when rapists stop raping.**

### **Simple Risk Reduction Strategies**

**Be alert.** Know what is going on around you. Try to avoid areas or times of isolation from others.

**Walk with confidence.** Using skills of assertiveness, a person is less likely to become a victim. Although stranger rape is less common than acquaintance rape, walk in well-lit areas, park under street lights, stick to main paths and routes.

**Communicate clearly.** Be familiar with your own sexual desires and limits. Openly and honestly discuss them with your partner. Give consistent information so that there is less room for ambiguity or uncertainty.

**Trust your instincts.** If you are uncomfortable about a situation, then leave right away.

**Use caution when first dating.** When dating someone new, remember that you still don't know this person yet. Arrange to meet your date at public locations for the first several dates as you get to know each other better. Have your own transportation to and from your first several dates. Let others know where you will be and when they can expect you to be back.

**Use alcohol responsibly.** Using alcohol or other drugs can increase the risk for sexual assault. Alcohol and other drugs affect decision-making. If you choose to drink, drink responsibly and know your limits. Never use illicit drugs.

**Protect you drink.** Never drink beverages from open containers or punch bowls when at a party or bar. Never leave a drink unattended. Never accept a drink from someone other than the bartender, waiter, or waitress. Date rape drugs, often colorless, tasteless, and odorless, can easily be slipped into drinks, rendering a person helpless.

**Use the Buddy System.** Go out with and return home with friends. Never leave a friend behind, especially one who is under the influence.

**Be aware of your actions.** Some people like to use the excuse that the way someone acted or dressed was the reason that they were raped. These notions are myths. No one deserves to be raped. Realize that certain behaviors can attract some negative attention. Be aware of this and be able to assertively respond to it.

