

What happens after rape?

After a sexual assault, a person can experience a wide range of reactions. It is extremely important to note that there is no one single response. Some rape survivors respond immediately, others may have delayed reactions. Some appear to be affected by the assault for a long time, whereas others appear to recover rather quickly. The stages that occur after a rape are defined as Rape Trauma Syndrome.

In the early stages, many report feeling shock, confusion, anxiety, and/or numbness. Sometimes feelings of denial are experienced. In other words, the person who was raped may not fully acknowledge what has happened or may downplay the intensity of the experience. This reaction may be more common among those who are sexually assaulted by someone they know.

Although survivors of sexual assault can experience a wide variety of symptoms, they do not have to suffer in silence. Help is available and should be sought. STAR Central provides confidential advocacy services to help University students identify available campus and local community resources.

Campus Resources

STAR Central	479-575-7252
For advocacy email	survivor@uark.edu
For education programs email	respect@uark.edu
CAPS 24 hr Emergency Line (Counseling & Psychological Services)	479-575-5276
UA Women's Clinic	479- 575-4478
Pat Walker Health Center (University Health Services)	479-575-4451
University Police	479-575-2222
Title IX	479-575-7111
Student Standards & Conduct	479-575-5170

In the event of an emergency, call 911.

If you want to speak on campus with someone confidentially about sexual or relationship violence, you may do so with a victim advocate, a mental health counselor, or a pastoral minister. Faculty and staff are required by federal law under Title IX to report incidents of sexual or relationship violence to the Title IX coordinator in order for the University to further investigate the matter. An advocate is available through STAR Central and may be reached by emailing survivor@uark.edu or at 479-575-7252 to arrange for an appointment.

***For more resource information, including community resources, please visit
<http://respect.uark.edu>***

Forensic Evidence Collection ("a Rape Kit") is available 24 hrs a day (no appointment necessary) at Northwest Medical Center – Willow Creek Emergency Department located just off of I-49, Exit 69 (Johnson exit). Also, available by appointment at NWA Sexual Assault Center, 479-445-6448, located on North Green Acres Road, Fayetteville.

Updated January 2017

When Rape Occurs



STAR Central
Pat Walker
Health Center

What to Do After a Rape

- Find a safe environment, anywhere away from the offender.
- Call a trusted friend or relative to stay with you.
- Preserve evidence of the assault – do NOT bathe, shower, douche, eat, drink, or brush teeth. If possible, try not to urinate or eliminate any waste. Any of these actions may wash away potential DNA evidence.
- Any clothing, if not still being worn, and any bedding or throw rugs should be preserved and not laundered. These items may contain evidence and be useful if you decide to report the crime.
- Get immediate medical attention. Even with no physical injuries, it is important to determine the potential risks for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy. In some cases, medications can be given to help prevent these risks.
- To preserve forensic evidence, have a forensic medical exam performed at a local emergency room or rape crisis forensic clinic.
- If you suspect you may have been drugged, ask that a urine sample be collected. The sample can be analyzed later by a forensic lab.
- Write down all the details you can recall about the incident and the offender. This information may be useful if you decide to report the crime.
- Report the rape to law enforcement authorities. Remember, you have been a victim of a crime and it is not your fault for what the perpetrator chose to do to you.
- Seek help with processing the many feelings that come after a rape. A counselor or therapist can help you understand the process of healing
- Remember it wasn't your fault.
- Recognize that healing from rape takes time. Give yourself the time you need.
- Know that it's never too late to call for help. Even if the sexual assault happened years ago, Sexual Assault Hotlines and Victim Advocacy Services can still help. Many victims do not realize they need help until months or years later.
- If you are a college student, talk to a professional at your school's health services, student affairs, or counseling services and learn about available resources to assist you during this difficult time.

Seeking Help

Immediate medical care should be sought, even if physical injuries are not apparent. Sometimes internal injuries exist. The University of Arkansas Pat Walker Health Center, University Health Services can provide students with general medical evaluation, but cannot provide forensic rape exams.

A forensic rape exam not only provides assurance of physical health through medical evaluation, but also allows for evidence to be collected and preserved so that it may later be used if it is decided to prosecute the suspected rapist. To collect evidence, a "rape kit" is used. The rape kit consists of a series of swabs for specimen gathering, placed in envelopes, and then sealed in a small box sent to the State Crime Lab.

Forensic rape exams are at your local hospital's emergency department. If the exam is done within 72 hours of the assault along with a police report being filed, the forensic exam is paid for by the state of Arkansas.