

Sexual Assault – Regardless of Gender

Provided by the Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney's Office – Kyle Witt
Office of the Victim Assistance Division

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the consent of the recipient regardless of their gender. It can also be referred to as rape, incest, date rape, marital rape, acquaintance rape, or sexual abuse.

Sexual assault may include:

- Showing sexual pictures or videos without consent
- Fondling of the genitals without consent
- Molestation
- Touching or grabbing of private parts regardless of whether it was under or over clothing
- Vaginal, oral or anal penetration of any kind without consent. (*Minors do not have the authority to consent sexual activity with an adult.*)
- Any sexually activity that was not consensual

For the definition of sexual assault under Ohio Law, click [here](#).

Sexual Assault is Gender-Blind

It is important to understand that sexual assault can happen to anyone regardless of their age or gender. Men and women have and can be sexually assaulted, however, more sexual assaults among men go unreported than those of women. Men sometimes fear that they will look weaker or as if they have failed if they have been assaulted. Sexual assault is no the victim's fault and male victims are no different. Whether it is female-to-male, male-to-male or female to female, the psychological effects are still present and need to be addressed through counseling and victim advocacy.

Steps for victims of Sexual Assault:

1. **DO NOT SHOWER, BATHE, OR OTHERWISE CLEAN YOURSELF OR YOUR CLOTHING.**
Do not wash away important evidence.
2. **CALL 9-1-1 & report the crime to law enforcement**
3. **GO DIRECTLY TO A HOSPITAL**
Preferably one where there is a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner. See next page about SANE Nurses.
4. **SPEAK TO A VICTIM ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST** within The Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.
For more information about our Victim Assistance Division, visit our website-tab titled 'Victim Assistance in Fairfield County' or call 740-652-7560 and ask to speak with a Victim Assistance Specialist.
5. **SEEK PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING**
6. **SEE MORE REFERENCES ON BELOW PAGES**

What is Consent? Consent refers to the freely granted permission. In sexual assault, consent must be given verbally or in an overwhelming clear way (i.e. explicit invitation for sexual activity, self-removal of clothing, etc.) Silence does not equal consent. If the person is unconscious, then any sexual activity with them is not consensual as they did not verbally state they did not want to engage in sexual activity nor did they overwhelmingly show they wished to engage in sexual activity.

See next page for more information about: *Sexual Assault Nurse Examines – SANE Nurses*

Sexual Assault – Victims

Local SANE PROGRAMS **(Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner)**

Harcum House/Children's Advocacy Center
Of Fairfield County
Lancaster, OH – 740-652-9604

The Lighthouse
Lancaster, OH – 740-687-4423

Fairfield Medical Center
Lancaster, OH – 687-8103

Adena Regional Medical Center
Chillicothe, OH – 740-779-7960

The Child Protection Center of Ross County
Chillicothe, OH – 740-779-7431

Berger Health System
Circleville, OH - 740-420-8379

Genesis-Good Samaritan Hospital
Zanesville, OH - 740-454-5880

The Kids' Place of Licking County
Newark, OH – 740-348-4988

Pomerene Hospital
Millersport, OH – 330-674-1015

Hocking Valley Community Hospital
Logan, OH – 740-380-3473

Doctor's West Hospital
Columbus, OH – 614-879-6943

Mount Carmel / St. Ann's Hospital
Westerville, OH - 614-898-4400

Grant / Riverside Hospital
Columbus, OH – 614-566-8596

Columbus Children's Hospital – SANE Program
Columbus, OH – 614-722-3282

Ohio University Student Health Services
Athens, OH – 740-593-1660

O'Bleness Memorial Hospital
Athens, OH – 740-592-9349

SANE Nurses are registered nurses who have completed a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Course with special training in Forensic Nursing. They are specially trained to handle sexual assault victimizations. They know what is needed to preserve crime samples and they can test you for sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. They generally work with emergency room staff. Some of the duties may include obtaining victim patient history, conducting an extensive interview and physical examination (including a pelvic exam to collect evidence) and to file a case report. Sexual Assault Nurses work with local law enforcement and also educate the victims on disease and pregnancy risks as well as prevention and ensuring a follow-up care report for victims.

Things to Remember after victimization:

- Healing takes time
- You can and do have the power to overcome this
- Understand your limits
- Communicate your limits with others who want to support you
- The people that care about you want to help empower you too
- It is okay to ask for help
- Empower yourself and others by overcoming and making people aware of sexual assault

How Victims React and Feel:

There is no one correct way to react after being a victim to sexual assault. Victims can and do react many different ways after their assault. Often, victims feel a lack of control, feel helplessness, anger, nauseated, they may cry, shake or yell or detached. These feelings may lead to victims' reluctance to report or tell others about their assault due to anxiety, shame, or fear. In addition, some victims may have felt some sort of physical responses by their body's reproductive organs. These are uncontrollable. There is no "typical" reaction to a sexual assault and it is always important to remember sexual assault is never the victim's fault.

Sexual Assault & Substance Abuse

It is common for victims of sexual assault and in some cases, their assaulters, to use substances such as alcohol, sex, and food addictions to cope with the abuse.

Also see tab on Domestic Violence

Sexual Assault – Victims

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is often a form of sexual assault in addition to domestic violence and occurs between two people in an intimate relationship. Typically IPV begins with emotional abuse. IPV can affect the abused partner's health from physical injuries to emotional. Victims can have symptoms of flashbacks, panic attacks, and trouble sleeping, among other signs of depression, anxiety, and fear. Many victims of IPV do not report to law enforcement, family, or friends for a variety of reasons from fear of not being believed or being punished by their abuser

Learn more / Get Help:

National Domestic Violence Hotline

www.ndvh.org

1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 TTY

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

www.ncadv.org

National Sexual Violence Resource Center

www.nsvrc.org

Family Violence Prevention Fund

www.endabuse.org

BRAVO - (*For Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual & Trans-Genders*)

(Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Organization)

www.bravo-ohio.org

For most men and some women, dealing with their emotions may be hard, especially after victimization. Emotions may be suppressed.

Victims may often deny the abuse or refuse to see how it affects their lives. Once they are in recovery and hear other victims, then they relate and start to heal.

People who have little or no connections to their emotions often do not know what they are feeling and do not know how to communicate to others about them.

For Men:

This comes from childhood. When little girls get hurt they are picked up and comforted, however, when little boys get hurt they are encouraged not to cry and told "you're ok" or "be tough, boys don't cry".

Men are usually looked at as the strong & tough and in control, or looked at as the predator, not as victims. Due to no fault of their own they appear as weak, making matters even more complicated for the male victim.

Female to male sexual abuse is often seen as "he got lucky". Male to male sexual abuse is often ignored or considered consensual or experimental.

Assaulters and Abusers

There is no one "typical" profile for assaulters and abusers in sexual assault cases. Most victims report that they know their abuser, however, these ranges from co-workers, to friends, family, significant others, partners, and close relatives.

Injuries can also occur in sexual assault or IPV cases however, in 99% of cases there are not any injuries.

Also see tab on Domestic Violence

Sexual Assault - Abusers

Abuser Presentation

Abusers (both sexual and not) often present themselves in the following ways:

- Stating they are the “real” victims of a crime
- Stating they are the ones holding the family together
- May acknowledge “family problems” but deny violence
- When confronted by others he/she may respond by saying: “She/He bruises easily,” “She/He was hysterical,” “She/He was drunk/high”, “I had to restrain her/him”
- May say that they know people within the law/law enforcement
- May call victim before going to testify and may try to confuse victim

Batters usually show symptoms of “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” in relationships.

Abuser/Assaulter Control

Abuser/Assaulters control their victims through:

- Physical Force
- Threatens to hurt them or loved ones
- Isolation
- Intimidation
- Drugs or Alcohol
- Emotional Abuse

Cycle of Violence

Stage 1- ‘Tension Building’

Threats of violence, name calling and intimidation, and increased effort by victim to please abuser.

Stage 2 – ‘Act of Violence’

Includes acts in which abuser begins to physically attacking the victim. Also involves pointing blame and responsibility on the victim.

Stage 3 – ‘Honeymoon’

Abuser apologizes and promises no more violence. Also involves blaming victim to minimize the abuse.

Techniques Used by Captors

- Isolation
- Threats
- Degradations
- Occasional Indulgences
- Monopolization of Perceptions
- Makes the Victim believe they are weak

Techniques Used by Abusers

- Intrusiveness & Isolation
- Threats to Kill
- Psychological Torture – Verbal
- Pattern of Violence Cycles
- Sexual Abuse
- Substance Abuse
- Previous Incidents