

What to do if you are Sexually Assaulted

Get to a Safe Place

If the person who assaulted you is still in the area, or his or her presence on campus is threatening, call the South Texas College Police Department (956-872-2589) or use a blue light emergency phone.

Contact Someone to Help

You may want to consider contacting a supportive friend or family member who can be there to assist you during the recovering from a sexual assault. You may also want to contact any of the following based on comfort level or personal circumstances.

- Family Crisis Center of the Rio Grande Valley, Harlingen (956-423-9305, 956-423-9306)
- South Texas College Counseling Center (956-872-2173)
- Health Services, McAllen (956-630-9441), Rio Grande City (956-487-2537)
- Your Chaplain or Priest
- Dean of Students Office (956-872-2180)
- Title IX Coordinator (956-872-3558)
- South Texas College Department of Public Safety (956-872-2589)

Preserve Physical Evidence

It is very important to preserve evidence of the assault and when possible perpetrator's identity, this includes but is not limited to hair, seminal fluids, bits of skin, etc. These bits of evidence may be left on the victim's body, it is important **NOT** to bathe, shower, douche, or even use the toilet. If the victim was assaulted orally, they should not drink anything or brush their teeth prior to an exam. Victims should not straighten up the scene of the incident and should take a change of clothes to the hospital. If the victim must change clothes, the items that were worn at the time of the attack should be placed in a **PAPER BAG** (not plastic) and taken to the hospital. The use of a plastic bag can destroy evidence. Having physical evidence collected can strengthen a case if the victim pursues legal action.

Seek Timely Medical Attention

Victims are encouraged to go for a sexual assault exam as soon as possible because injuries should be treated promptly and evidence deteriorates quickly. If you go to the Emergency Room, the hospital staff will more than likely contact the local law enforcement agency. This does not mean that you are required to file a police report or file charges.

- The hospital staff will check for sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and pregnancy, physical injuries and the collection of evidence.
- Request the doctor give you a blood and urine test if you suspect the use of a date rape drug, this test is not be done routinely. For some drugs such as GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) sometimes called “Liquid Ecstasy” there is a small window of time 4-12 hours that it may show on a drug screen, this makes it very important to go to the Emergency Room as soon as possible.
- When drugged, you may feel drunk or impaired very quickly maybe even after one drink or even one sip. You may feel drowsy, dizzy, nauseated, uncoordinated, and have loss of memory. GHB is often colorless and tasteless if added to your drink. If you suspect being drugged remember to request the hospital staff to test for that specific drug.
- If you are not sure you want to press charges it is important to take the above steps so that legal action can be taken if you change your mind at a later date.
- If the assault occurred weeks or months before, medical attention is still important.

Ask Questions

Victims have the right to ask questions throughout the process and decide what is best for them. Victims are encouraged to use both on- and off-campus resources to help understand available options.

DISCLAIMER:

The information provided on this page is for general informational purposes only, and is not to be considered comprehensive, or complete or legal advice. The information should be considered general information about sexual harassment and should not be construed as legal advice. For information about your legal rights you should consult an attorney.