



Survivor Rights

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Many survivors of violent crimes and sexual assault experience emotional shock. Part of this process is for survivors to take control of their lives again. In order to do this, survivors must be certain that they are receiving the care and information to which they are entitled. Know your rights!

As a survivor, you have the right:

- To call a rape crisis center, even if you're not sure if what happened to you was rape. (*See Resource List for resources in North Carolina, or ask us to find a resource local to you.*)
- To determine whether or not you want to report the assault to the police.
- To request to be interviewed by a female officer if you decide to make a report. (This may result in delays in reporting.)
- To report a crime, but not proceed with prosecution.
- To make a blind report, where you report the crime without giving your name.
- To withdraw your testimony against the attacker at any time.
- To be treated in a considerate and sensitive manner.
- To sue a person or company for negligence, if you were assaulted in a place having unsafe conditions.
- To contact and be contacted (where and when you wish) by the police or court.
- To get copies of police reports.
- To report the attack to the police and expect that all avenues within the law will be pursued to find and convict the offender.
- To file a third-party report (i.e. a rape crisis center reports the crime but does not disclose your name).
- To not be exposed to prejudice because of your race, age, class, lifestyle, or occupation.
- To be considered a rape survivor regardless of the relationship of the assailant to you (for example, spouse, acquaintance, relative, etc.).
- To be loved—you have done nothing wrong.

As a patient, you have the right:

- To refuse the collection of medical evidence, even though you may request STD and pregnancy tests.
- To privacy during treatment or collection of evidence.
- To have the examination without a parent or guardian present, even if you are a minor.
- To request that police officers leave the examining room.
- To request that a friend, family member, or Companion stays with you in the examination room.
- To have each procedure explained in detail before it is done.
- To an explanation of the reason for every test, form, and procedure.
- To get copies of medical reports.
- To apply for reimbursement for certain medical expenses.
- To strict confidentiality.
- To have common reactions such as sleeplessness, nightmares, anxiety, and fear, and not have these reactions considered abnormal behavior.

Finally, you have the right to survive — which means that you have the right to request everything that you need in making the transition from victim to survivor.