testing to restore your peace of mind. The Mecklenburg County Health Department offers this test at no charge. You should take your first test in the days following the assault and follow up with a second test three months later. To find out more about testing available through the Health Department, call 704 336-6400.

Where Can I Get Help With Medical Costs?

If you have medical insurance, give this information to the hospital so they can file your insurance claim. If you do not have insurance or it does not cover all of your expenses, you can apply for Victim Compensation through the N.C. Crime Victims Compensation Fund. For more information regarding this service, call Victim Assistance at 704 367-2735, or call directly to Victim Compensation at 1-800-826-6200.

Victim Assistance
704 332-9034
-or-
704 375-9900
(24-hour line)

Your Rape Crisis Companion: _____

Your Nurse: _____

Police Officer/Detectives: _____

_____

Information for Victims of Sexual Assault

produced by Victim Assistance, a program of

United
Family
Services

United Way of Central Carolinas, Inc.

You've Been Raped – What Happens Now?

Rape or other types of sexual assault can happen to anyone of any age. It is important to remember that what has happened to you is not your fault. Although, you are likely to feel embarrassed and may blame yourself, the only person who should be ashamed is the one who has assaulted you. Your immediate reaction may be fear, anger and disbelief. There is no right or wrong way to act; everyone is different. You have made an important decision in choosing to go to the hospital. Be sure to tell hospital personnel that you would like to have a Rape Crisis Companion with you. This caring person can provide you with information and emotional support as you go through the examination and talk with the police. At the hospital, you will be examined and treated for any injuries. It is important to tell the nurse if you think any type of drugs were given to you by the suspect. It is crucial that testing for these drugs be done as soon as possible. A rape kit will be done in order to gather evidence which will be needed if the rapist goes to court. You will also receive medication to prevent any sexually transmitted diseases. The police usually need to take your clothing as evidence. If you do not have other clothes with you, the Patient Representative will give you something to wear home. Victim Assistance provides jogging suits to area hospitals for such use.

What Can I Expect When I Leave The Hospital?

You will probably be very tired when you leave the hospital. Be sure you have a safe place to go and rest. If possible, have a friend or relative stay with you or go to their home. It is normal to feel frightened and to be aware of every sound around you. Some women have found it helpful to leave lights on or to adopt a pet. Having gone through such a traumatic event, you may experience many different feelings. You may feel numb as though you are in a dream. You may not be able to think clearly. There may be physical reactions, such as soreness, headaches and nausea. All of these are normal reactions under the circumstances. Eat lightly and drink plenty of fluids, preferably water or carbonated drinks if you are nauseated. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Take care of yourself; you need time to heal.

When Will I Be Contacted Again By Police?

After you have given your initial report to the police officer at the scene or at the hospital, the police will begin a search for the person who assaulted you. They will also give a report to rape investigators. One of these investigators will be assigned to your case and will contact you. It could be several days before you hear from anyone, though. Be sure to let the police know if you are staying at a different address than the one you gave at the hospital. This information is very important and will speed up the process. If you have information to give the police or want to know who is assigned to your case, call 704 336-2311. If you have difficulty reaching an investigator, feel free to call Victim Assistance's Rape Crisis line at 704 375-9900.

How Can I Recover From The Sexual Assault?

Survivors of sexual assault have told Victim Assistance that it is very important to talk to someone rather than try and keep your feelings to yourself. Your family and friends, in most cases, can be a support network if you tell them what you need. Find someone to talk to. You should not be blamed for what has happened. At Victim Assistance we have professional counselors who will be glad to talk with you and your family members. There is no charge for our confidential services. Many people find it helpful to talk with others who have experienced similar situations. Victim Assistance has a support group for rape victims. To speak with a counselor or learn more about our support group, call 704 332-9034, weekdays, from 8:30 am to 5 pm. If you need to speak with someone after hours or on weekends, call our trained volunteers at 704 375-9900.

What Is The Possibility Of Contracting AIDS From Rape?

This is an issue that concerns many rape victims. Although doctors tell us that it is unlikely to contract AIDS from a rape, it is possible and you need to obtain