



MY SAFE CARD



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Police	10111
GBV Command Centre	0800 428 428
Lifeline	0861 322 322
Stop GBV Helpline	0800 150 150
Childline	116
National Shelter Helpline	0800 001 005

1 I'VE BEEN RAPED OR SEXUALLY ASSAULTED. WHAT NOW?

Make sure you are **SAFE**. Call the police to help you.

Tell someone you trust right away. This person could be a **WITNESS** in your case if you decide to report it.

Go to a **HOSPITAL** or **CLINIC** as soon as possible. Medicine to treat or prevent HIV, STIs and pregnancy needs to be taken within 72 hours (3 days) of the rape.

You can go straight to a hospital for treatment or to the police to report the crime. Or you can report to a social worker for counselling and other services. You can report to all of these places; reporting to one doesn't mean that you can't report to the others.

Try **NOT** to wash, shower or change your clothes before you report to the hospital or clinic or the police. If a condom was used, keep it. If you were using a sanitary pad or tampons, keep them too. This is for **EVIDENCE**.

If you really want to change, put the clothes you were wearing into a paper bag or wrap them in newspaper.

If the person who raped you touched your mouth, try not to smoke, rinse your mouth, brush your teeth, or eat or drink anything.

REPORTING

You do not have to pay any money to report a case.

You can take someone you trust with you for support.

A family member, friend, counsellor or teacher can report for you but if you are older than 12, you will have to give a statement later if you want to lay a charge.

You don't have to report to the police to get medical services. If you get medical treatment first, you can still report to the police later.

If you go to a police station first, the police must take you to the hospital as soon as possible.

Part of the investigation is a medical examination for evidence. This is called a **FORENSIC EXAM**.

If you can't or haven't kept evidence, you can still report the rape.

Rape is still a crime even if you were using **DRUGS OR ALCOHOL** at the time.

You should tell the police and health worker if you have been using drugs or alcohol. This information can't be used against you but it is important.

Rape is still a crime if you are a **SEX WORKER**, or are **MARRIED** or **IN A RELATIONSHIP** with the person who raped you.

Try not to wash your body or change clothes



KEEP EVIDENCE



Report at any police station

YOU CAN TAKE SOMEONE WITH YOU

Get to a rape care centre within 72 hours!

CALL THE GBV COMMAND CENTRE FOR YOUR NEAREST RAPE CARE SERVICES



One-stop rape care services are called Thuthuzela Care Centres or Designated Centres

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FREE HEALTH SERVICES

2 AT THE HOSPITAL OR CLINIC

When you go to the hospital or clinic, you can take someone with you for support.

Some places will offer you a **FIRST RESPONSE COUNSELLOR**. This person is there to support you and tell you what to expect.

If you have serious injuries (like broken bones or heavy bleeding) health workers will treat these first.

You have a right to medical treatment, a forensic exam and medicine to prevent HIV, STIs and pregnancy.

All of this is **FREE OF CHARGE** at public hospitals or clinics.

You should be seen by a health worker, even if you can't see or feel injuries.

The health worker cannot make you report to the police.

You have the right to ask the health worker **QUESTIONS**. They must explain what they are doing to you.

Some of the medicine they give you might make you feel a bit sick. Ask them for medicine to prevent sickness.

FORENSIC EXAM

The health worker will ask if they can do a forensic exam on you to find evidence for the case. They will examine the places on your body where there was contact with the person who raped you.

The forensic exam has two parts:

1. A physical exam where the doctor records your injuries
2. Taking biological evidence like swabs.

If you are wearing the clothes you had on during the rape, the nurse will take your clothes and underwear for evidence.

After the forensic exam is finished, you can wash, eat, drink, smoke and brush your teeth.

You should have a forensic exam to collect evidence **even if you haven't yet decided to open a case** with the police. This evidence can be used if you decide to open a case later.

HIV



There is medicine that can stop you from getting HIV after rape. It is called Post-Exposure Prophylaxis or **PEP**.

The first responder or health worker will ask you if they can do an HIV test because you can't take PEP if you are already HIV positive.

If you are not HIV positive, it is important to start PEP **within 72 hours (3 days)** of the rape.

This HIV prevention medicine must be taken **every day** for **28 days** (4 weeks).

Set a **REMINDER** in your cellphone or diary to make sure you take your medicine every day.

You may need to come back to the hospital or clinic for a **follow-up**. Set a reminder of the follow-up dates. You may get more medicine at these visits.

You should get tested for HIV again after you have finished the medicine.



PREGNANCY

You have the right to medicine to prevent a possible pregnancy from the rape. This must be taken **within 5 days** of the rape.

If you become pregnant as a result of the rape, you can have an abortion free of charge if you are less than 20 weeks pregnant. Ask the health worker about this.

If you become pregnant as a result of rape and you don't want an abortion, talk to your counsellor about your options, including adoption.

STIs

You will be tested for **SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS** (STIs) after the rape. You may develop signs or symptoms after your visit to the clinic. Go back for treatment if this happens.

Symptoms include smelly fluids, warts, sores, burning when weeing, pain in the tummy, itching, swollen or painful private parts.

COUNSELLING

You may need help dealing with what has happened to you. Ask your first responder, health worker, police or prosecutor to refer you for counselling.

There are Community Organisations or NGOs that provide counselling free of charge. Turn over and see 5. **SUPPORT SERVICES** to find out more about this.

HOW TO USE THIS CARD

This card guides you through what to do if you have been raped. Take it with you when you go to the hospital, police station, court or for counselling.

If you don't understand anything, get someone you trust to read it and explain.

Fill in your personal information on the first panel. It tears off so that you can keep it safe.

Although we call it rape, this information applies to all sexual violence or abuse.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS

- 1 WHAT NOW?
- 2 AT THE HOSPITAL
- 3 AT THE POLICE
- 4 MY COURT CASE
- 5 SUPPORT
- 6 COMPLAINTS



Make sure you are safe

CALL 10111 FOR POLICE

Tell someone you trust



my journey

3 AT THE POLICE STATION

Report the rape to the police to lay a criminal charge and open a case. By law, they **must help you immediately**, even if the rape happened long ago.

You do not have to pay any money to report a case.

The police must help you even if you live in a **different area** to the police station or if the rape happened in a different area.

The police must take you to a **private room** to hear what happened to you. Here they will take the basic details of your case and call the **INVESTIGATING OFFICER**.

The police will take you to a hospital or clinic for a medical examination and treatment.

MY STATEMENT

A statement is a detailed record of what happened to you in your own words.

You have the right to have someone you trust with you when you give your statement.

You have the right to give the statement **in your own language**. Ask the police to get someone to help you do this.

When you make your statement, try to remember as many details as possible. The police will ask you questions to help get all the information.

The investigating officer will write everything down and ask you to **sign** it. Only sign the statement if you agree with what is written.

If anything is left out or if there are any mistakes, ask the police officer to correct them.

The police will give you a **copy of your statement**.

If you remember something else after you have made your statement, call the investigating officer to add this. Ask for a new copy of your statement.

ARREST AND SAFETY

The investigating officer must let you know if the person(s) who raped you – the **PERPETRATOR(S)** – have been arrested or not.

The perpetrator may be out of prison while waiting for the court case. This is called **bail**. The investigating officer will let you know if the perpetrator got bail.

INVESTIGATION

A police case number is called a **CAS** number. This number will be sent to your phone as an SMS.

You will also get an SMS with the name and number of the investigating officer for your case.

The investigating officer should contact you within 36 hours to record the full details of what happened to you. This is called a **STATEMENT**.

Let the investigating officer know if your contact details change at any time while your case is still open. This is **very important** because they need to contact you about your case.



4 MY COURT CASE

Once the police have investigated your case, it will be sent to a lawyer at the court. This person is called the **PROSECUTOR**.

A case can only go to trial if there is enough evidence. The prosecutor will tell you whether or not your case will go to trial. Many things go into this decision. If your case doesn't go to trial, it doesn't mean that no one believes you or that you were not raped.

You will not get your own lawyer because in rape cases, the state brings the case. The prosecutor acts on your behalf and tells the court what happened to you. You may be called to speak (or **testify**) as a witness in the trial.

Write down the name and contact details of the prosecutor. It is important to let the prosecutor know if your own contact details have changed at any time while your case is on trial.

You may need ongoing support during and after trial. Ask the prosecutor to refer you for counselling.

BAIL

After being arrested, the perpetrators will appear in court to apply for bail. This is called a **bail hearing**. Bail is a temporary release from prison until the case goes to court.

This may mean that the perpetrator is out in the community during this time. You do not have to go to the bail hearing but if you do go, take someone with you for support.

IDENTITY PARADE

If the police have arrested the perpetrator you may be asked to point them out from a group of people. This is called an identity parade. This might be scary but the police will make sure that the perpetrator can't see you.

TESTING FOR HIV

You can ask to have the **perpetrator(s) tested for HIV**. This must be done within 90 days of the rape. Ask the investigating officer for more information about this and to help you.

When the results of the test come back, they will be given to you privately. Talk to your counsellor or a health worker about what the results mean for you.

STAYING IN CONTACT

It is very important that the investigating officer has the **right phone number** and address so that they can contact you about your case. Remember to let them know if your phone number or address changes.



You will get a written notice saying when you must be in court to testify. This is called a **subpoena** (pronounced suh-peena) and it must be hand-delivered so keep your address up to date.

The prosecutor should contact you before the trial to get a **victim impact statement** to explain how the rape has affected your life. Write down the date you gave the statement. If you are not contacted about a victim impact statement you should call the investigating officer or prosecutor.

TRIAL

At the trial, you will be asked to say what happened to you in court in front of the magistrate (judge), the lawyers and the perpetrator. You will also hear if you will be allowed to testify in front of a camera.

Once the magistrate has heard evidence from the prosecutor and the perpetrator's lawyer, they will decide if there is enough proof to find them guilty. If the perpetrator is not found guilty, it doesn't mean that no one believed you or that the rape did not happen. Ask the prosecutor to explain why they were not found guilty.

If the perpetrator is found guilty, there will be another date to decide what their punishment (sentence) will be. The magistrate will use your victim impact statement to help them decide on the sentence.

If you have not given a victim impact statement, you should call the prosecutor.

PREPPING FOR TRIAL

The prosecutor will ask you to meet with them to go over your statement. If you don't agree with anything in the statement, point it out to them.

Once the **trial date** is set, the prosecutor should discuss your case with you in detail and explain what your role in the trial will be. Write down the trial date. Ask the prosecutor if there are any services that can prepare you for trial and support you in court on the day.

You can take a friend or family member with you to court for support but they may not be allowed to be with you in court when you testify.

Ask the prosecutor if you can testify in front of a **camera** (CCTV) so that you won't have to say what happened to you in front of the perpetrator.

5 SUPPORT SERVICES

COUNSELLING

Counselling is a safe space to talk about the rape, deal with its effects and your trauma and to prepare for court.

Ask the investigating officer or health worker to give you the contact details of a support organisation near you. The helpline numbers on the back of this card can also help.

SOCIAL WORKERS

You can report the rape to a social worker. If you do, write their name and number down.

The social worker cannot make you report to the police. But if you are under 18, they must tell the police.

If you live with the perpetrator, your social worker can make arrangements for you to be safe. If the perpetrator is your family's breadwinner and you are worried about money if you report them, the social worker can help you make different arrangements.

6 COMPLAINTS

If a service provider has treated you unfairly or didn't do what they are supposed to by law, you can make a complaint.

You can complain about a hospital, clinic, doctor, nurse, police officer, investigating officer, magistrate, prosecutor, social worker or NGO.

You can call the numbers on the back of this card to help you with the complaint.

This publication was adapted by NACOSA based on the work of the Gender Health & Justice Research Unit and the Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust. The production of this card was funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.



NACOSA

