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## **Common Reactions Following a Sexual Assault**

### **Physical Reactions**

<b>Trouble sleeping</b>	I toss and turn throughout much of the night. I can't sleep because of nightmares.
<b>Nightmares</b>	When I do fall asleep, I have nightmares about being assaulted or in danger.
<b>Headaches</b>	I've noticed that I'm getting headaches more often than I normally do.
<b>Loss of appetite</b>	I know I need to eat, but I just haven't felt hungry lately.
<b>Overeating</b>	I've been eating more lately. Sometimes it seems to make me feel better.
<b>Stomach problems</b>	My stomach feels like it's in knots and I feel nauseous.
<b>Muscle tension</b>	I've been clenching the muscles in my jaw, back, or neck constantly.

### **Emotional Reactions**

<b>Emotional shock</b>	I feel so numb. What am I so calm? Why can't I cry?
<b>Disbelief</b>	Did it really happen? Why me? Maybe I just made it up.
<b>Embarrassment</b>	What will people think? I can't tell my family or friends.
<b>Shame</b>	I feel so dirty, like there is something wrong with me. I constantly want to shower.
<b>Guilt</b>	I feel as if it's my fault, or I did something to cause this. If only I had...
<b>Depression</b>	How am I going to get through this semester? I'm so tired. I feel so helpless. Maybe I'd be better off dead.
<b>Powerlessness</b>	Will I ever feel in control again?
<b>Flashbacks</b>	I keep having flashbacks, like I'm still re-living it. I keep seeing the assault in my mind and I can't stop it.
<b>Denial</b>	It's no big deal. It wasn't really a "rape".
<b>Fear</b>	I'm scared of everything. What if I'm pregnant? Could I get an STD or even AIDS? How will I ever feel safe again? I'm afraid I'm going crazy.
<b>Anger</b>	I want to hurt or kill the person who attacked me.
<b>Irritability</b>	I'm just so easily annoyed by everyone and everything. I keep snapping at people.

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## Social Reactions

<b>Withdrawing from friends</b>	I don't want anyone to know what happened to me.
<b>Difficulty trusting</b>	I feel violated. How will I ever trust anyone again?
<b>Romantic difficulties</b>	My significant other wants to be physically intimate but I just feel like I can't. I just don't want to be touched.
<b>Fear of public/social situations</b>	I'm having panic attacks, where I feel like I can't breathe and can't stop shaking. It's hard for me to sit still in class. I feel overwhelmed.

## Academic Reactions

<b>Lack of concentration</b>	When I sit down to read or am in class, my mind wanders to thinking about other things.
<b>Impaired memory</b>	I don't even know what day it is, or what class I'm supposed to be in. I can't remember my appointments. I keep forgetting things.
<b>Missing classes</b>	People probably think I'm a slacker, but I just can't get myself to class lately.
<b>Lack of motivation</b>	My homework is piling up, but I don't even care right now.