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## What to DO if You Have Been Sexually Assaulted

If you have been assaulted, or THINK you may have been, you SHOULD:

Go to a safe place and find someone to be with you who can be emotionally supportive.

Report to the police, if you feel you are able to do so.

It is your decision whether or not to file a report. Some things to keep in mind when considering whether to make a report are that the more assaults that are reported, the more perpetrators are arrested and convicted. Also, the earlier you report the more likely evidence can be collected. The police can help you to understand the laws regarding sexual assault, if you are not sure you have been sexually assaulted.

Towson University Police: 410-704-2133 (<http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/>)

County Police: 911 (<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/agencies/police>)

### Seek medical treatment IMMEDIATELY

It is very important to seek medical attention as soon as possible so you can be treated for any physical injuries, screened for sexually transmitted diseases/pregnancy/date rape drugs, and/or to obtain emergency contraception. Seek medical care even if you do not think you are going to report the assault

If you believe that you have been drugged, it is especially important to seek medical attention **IMMEDIATELY**, these drugs leave your system quickly and can only be detected for a short time after the assault (24-72 hours).

### Signs That You Might Have Been Given a Date Rape Drug

- If you feel a lot more intoxicated than your usual response to the amount of alcohol you consumed
- If you wake up abnormally hung-over with memory lapses and cannot account for periods of time.
- If you remember taking a drink but cannot recall what happened for a period of time after that.
- If you feel as though someone had sex with you, but you cannot remember parts of or the entire incident.

## Options for Medical Treatment:

1. GBMC and Mercy Hospital both have trained staff to conduct a S.A.F.E. (Sexual Assault Forensic Exam). **If you think you may want to press charges, it is essential to go as soon as possible for this exam.** It focuses on evidence collection and the State of Maryland pays for this exam. Evidence can be collected up to 120 hours after the assault, but the sooner it is done the more likely useful evidence can be recovered.
2. Go to Dowell Health Center (410-704-2466). The Health Center is fully equipped to assess your injuries, test for and treat STDs, and provide emergency contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Services are **confidential**. Even if you are unsure whether you want to press charges, the Health Center staff can still provide care and assistance with your decision making.
3. Seek medical treatment through your general physician, nurse practitioner, or your gynecologist.

**Seek professional counseling at the Counseling Center (410-704-2512) or local rape crisis center (Turnaround, 410-377-8111).**

A counselor can assist you in understanding your reactions to the assault, help enhance your coping skills, and provide support throughout the legal decision making process. At the Counseling Center these services are free and confidential

**File a report with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs (410-704-2055).**

If the accused is a Towson student, a victim may initiate judicial action, regardless of whether criminal charges have been filed. Also, a victim may request a change of on-campus living, class schedule, or other accommodations related to the assault

**Discuss your feelings regarding resuming sexual relations with your partner (if he/she is not the perpetrator)**

**Be patient and treat yourself with kindness. Healing takes time.**

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## **What NOT to DO if You Have Been Sexually Assaulted**

**Take a shower, wash hands or face, comb your hair, douche, change or get rid of your clothes.**

Evidence of the assault can be found in the fibers of your clothes, strands of your hair or on other parts of your body, so it is important to try your best to preserve as much evidence as possible.

**Apply medication or any other substance that can change your appearance.**

Altering your appearance can hide bruising or lacerations, which can be cited as evidence.

**Smoke or drink anything.**

**Urinate or defecate, if possible.**

Normal everyday behavior, such as going to the bathroom, can destroy or remove evidence of the assault.

**Disturb or change the surroundings where the assault occurred.**

**Blame yourself for the assault.**

No matter what you were doing or wearing, you did NOT ask to be sexually assaulted.

**Hide the fact that you have been assaulted.**

Close friends/ family whom you trust can be very beneficial in providing support and helping you to cope.

**Withdraw from your daily activities.**

**Pretend the assault never happened.**

It is normal to want to just “forget” about it, but this will NOT make your difficult feelings go away.

**Question or worry about how you handled the assault.**

The important thing is that you survived.