

# What to Expect When Reporting a Sexual Assault

**Sexual Assault:** Any form of sexual activity **without your permission**. It includes (but is not limited to): kissing, grabbing, fondling, and rape (i.e. anal, oral and vaginal sex). Sexual assault is an **act of violence and is a crime**. Sexual assault is often committed by someone the victim knows, such as a friend or acquaintance.

If you believe you have been sexually assaulted, you have the option to proceed with a **Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)**, which is used to **document the collection of physical evidence** that may assist in the investigation of a sexual assault. All information provided with the SAEK is subject to disclosure and may be made available to the defence.

North Bay has a **SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners)** team. They are on call 24/7, and after proceeding to the emergency room with a sexual assault report, you will be directed to SANE.

## Options

You have **3 choices** after deciding to report a sexual assault:

1. To **proceed with a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)** and **report** to the police
2. To **proceed with a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)** and **NOT report** to the police
3. To **proceed with a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)**, **not report** to the police and not examine the kit, instead **have it frozen** for up to 3 months

**Treatment** for injuries, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases is always offered.

### You have rights!

- You may request that a staff member from a local sexual assault centre assist you during the process
- If you are uncomfortable with any procedures, you can refuse them
- If you are uncomfortable with your doctor, you may request someone else
- The doctor should be able to explain everything that they are doing as they are doing it, and you have the right to ask about any procedures.

### When reporting a sexual assault, it is best to:

- Report as soon as possible (within 72 hours of assault). The sooner the report is done, the more evidence can be collected.
- If possible, do not shower or change clothes to preserve as much DNA as possible (If you change your clothes, do not wash them)
- Bring a change of clothes to the hospital, including a bra and underwear (they may need to keep what you were wearing as evidence)
- Bring your health card

# Procedures

The process of the sexual assault evidence kit can take up to four hours, not including the reporting to police process.

Some of the steps may include:

- ✚ Collection of clothing (including underwear)
- ✚ Collection of 2 oral swabs
- ✚ Collection of fingernail samples
- ✚ Collection of head hair samples
- ✚ Blood sample
- ✚ Pubic hair and foreign material (tampons, sanitary napkins, diapers)
- ✚ External genitalia samples (vaginal and rectal)
- ✚ Interior vaginal and rectal samples
- ✚ Urine sample
- ✚ DNA sample will be taken from the patient's mouth. This is taken to differentiate the assailant's DNA from the victim's.
- ✚ Taking photographs of the victim

The SAEK is closely guarded to avoid evidence tampering or contamination.

The hospital will provide any needed medical attention. This includes, but is not limited to: providing the morning after pill, providing a pregnancy test, testing for STIs, providing treatment to prevent HIV, and treating physical injuries.

## What to expect when reporting to the police

When being questioned about an assault, an officer must consider all aspects of the accusation, and will ask several questions that may be perceived as blame towards the victim. Some of the typical questions may include:

- ✚ Was it consensual?
- ✚ Why didn't you fight back?
- ✚ Were there drugs or alcohol involved?

After reporting to police, the accused will often be questioned.

Reports of a sexual assault stay on record forever. By filing a report, the assailant's name will always be on file. and may link to future investigations.

If you have a friend who has been sexually assaulted, there are many ways that you can help.

- ✚ Respect and support a friend who tells you about a sexual assault
- ✚ Help your friend cope, listen without judgment
- ✚ Help your friend find a local sexual assault service (such as Amelia Rising Sexual Assault Centre of Nipissing)
- ✚ Do **not** blame your friend for what happened or ask details about what happened.

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**AMELIA RISING**  
sexual assault centre of nipissing  
centre d'agressions sexuelles de nipissing

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(705) 476-3355