

# SEXUAL ASSAULT

## 1. What is sexual assault?

Sexual assault is a general term that refers to sexual contact or conduct committed by one person against another, without the other person's consent. Sexual contact or conduct can take many forms. Some examples include indecent exposure, sodomy and rape. Perpetrators of sexual assaults can be of any age, race, gender or ability, and sexual assaults are most frequently committed by someone the victim knows. If you have been fondled, kissed, against your will and/or forced or coerced into any other form of sexual contact then you may have been sexually assaulted.

**According to CUNY Policy:** The City University of New York seeks to create and maintain a safe environment in which all members of the University community—students, faculty and staff—can learn and work free from the fear of sexual violence. Improper sexual conduct is a criminal offense pursuant to the New York State Penal Law, Sections 130.00 – 130.70. If a member of the college community engages in improper sexual conduct, it will result in the severest disciplinary sanctions available to the College. The College will also cooperate fully with law enforcement authorities should the victim seek criminal prosecution. The College recognizes that confidentiality is most important to victims of sex crimes. While complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality on a “need to know basis.” Generally, the wishes of a victim not to report a sexual assault to the police will prevail, but the College reserves the right to notify the police when it believes that such reporting is necessary for the protection of others. For more information about sexual assault, or to find the legal definition for a specific state, visit: [Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network \(RAINN\)](#)

## 2. What can I do if I have been sexually assaulted?

- First, make sure you are not in any immediate danger.
- If you are on campus, dial 212-237-8888 for security, or find the nearest alert phone and press #1. (Alert phones are located in every classroom and bathroom.)
- If you are not on campus, call 911 or go to your local hospital emergency room for immediate medical care.
- Try not to shower or change your clothes. Doing so might erase evidence of the crime.
- When you get to the hospital, tell the triage nurse that you were sexually assaulted and would like a SAFE Exam. This will ensure that you get the appropriate medical care, and that you are not billed for the services you receive while you're in the emergency room.

Going to the emergency room does not require that you report the assault to police. Seeking medical care is a way to check for injury, prevent sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, get counseling and collect evidence if and when you decide to make a police report in the future.

- Whether or not you decide to seek medical attention or file a police report, find someone with whom to talk. Rape and sexual assault are traumatic and painful experiences, regardless of whether they happened ten minutes ago, or ten years ago. If you were raped or sexually assaulted in the past, these support services are available also to you and can be helpful.
- You can also choose to call the Safe Horizon 24-hour hotline at (212) 227-3000, or contact a nearby rape crisis program. For a comprehensive list of programs in New York City, go to [www.nycagainstrape.org](http://www.nycagainstrape.org).

## 3. How can I help a friend who's been sexually assaulted?

- Stay calm and listen. Avoid making judgments and giving advice.
- Let the person know the assault is not their fault.
- Encourage your friend to seek professional counseling.
- Support and respect decisions. Be patient and respect your friend's decisions, *even if you don't agree with them*.
- Remember that you may be emotionally affected when someone you know has been sexually assaulted. You may

want to seek counseling, advocacy or support for yourself.

**4. Go to our resource page for more services.**

Know these are no guarantee of your safety and should not be used as a substitute for reaching out to a trained service provider or the police. Come to the Women's Center or contact one of the resources listed on our resource page for more comprehensive services.