Prevention Information

Protecting Against Acquaintance Rape

MEN:

1. **Listen carefully.** Take the time to hear what the woman is saying. If you feel she is not being direct or is giving you a “mixed message,” ask for a clarification.

2. **Don’t fall for the common stereotype that when a woman says “NO” she really means “Yes.”** “No” means “No.” If a woman says “No” to a sexual contact, believe her and stop.

3. **Remember that date rape is a crime.** It is never acceptable to use force in sexual situations, no matter what the circumstances.

4. **Don’t make assumptions about a woman’s behavior.** Don’t automatically assume that a woman wants to have sex just because she drinks heavily, dresses provocatively, or agrees to go to your room. Don’t assume that just because a woman has had sex with you previously she is willing to have sex with you again. Also don’t assume that just because a woman consents to kissing or other sexual intimacies she is willing to have sexual intercourse.

5. **Be aware that having sex with someone who is mentally or physically incapable of giving consent is rape.** If you have sex with a woman who is drugged, intoxicated, passed out, incapable of saying “NO,” or unaware of what is happening around her, you may be guilty of rape.

6. **Be especially careful in group situations.** Be prepared to resist pressure from friends to participate in violent or criminal acts.

7. **“Get involved” if you believe someone is at risk.** If you see a woman in trouble at a party or a male friend using force or pressuring a woman, don’t be afraid to intervene. You may save the woman from the trauma of sexual assault and your friend from the ordeal of criminal prosecution.

Both men and women should be especially careful in situations involving the use of alcohol or drugs. Alcohol and drugs can interfere with your ability to assess situations and to communicate effectively.

WOMEN:

1. **Know your sexual intentions and limits.** You have the right to say “no” to any unwanted sexual contact. If you are uncertain about what you want, ask the man to respect your feelings.

2. **Communicate your limits firmly and directly.** If you say “No,” say it like you mean it. Don’t give mixed messages. Back up your words with a firm tone of voice and clear body language.

3. **Don’t rely on “ESP” to get your message across.** Don’t assume that your date will automatically know how you feel, or will eventually “get the message” without your having to tell him.

4. **Remember that some men think that drinking heavily, dressing provocatively, or going to a man’s room indicates a willingness to have sex.** Be especially careful to communicate your limits and intentions clearly in such situations.

5. **Listen to your gut feelings.** If you feel uncomfortable or think you may be at risk, leave the situation immediately and go to a safe place.

6. **Don’t be afraid to “make waves” if you feel threatened.** If you feel you are being pressured or coerced into sexual activity against your will, don’t hesitate to state your feelings and get out of the situation. Better a few minutes of social awkwardness or embarrassment than the trauma of sexual assault.

7. **Attend large parties with friends you can trust.** Agree to “look out” for one another. Try to leave with a group, rather than alone or with someone you don’t know very well.
Prevention Information

Protecting Against Stranger Rape

WALKING ON CAMPUS

1. Always be aware of what is going on around you. Stay alert to your surroundings.

2. Walk with confidence. Hold your head up and shoulders straight.

3. At night, stick to well-lighted, populated areas and walk with another person. Avoid walking alone or in isolated areas.

4. Use campus escort services.

5. Take special precautions in parking structures, stairwells, elevators, bathrooms, and dark areas with shrubbery. Studies show that many assaults by strangers occur in these places.

6. If you suspect that you are being followed, go to a place where there are other people as soon as possible. If you choose to run, run as fast as you are able and scream to attract attention or summon help.

7. Follow your gut instincts. If you sense that you may be at risk or in danger, try to get out of the situation. For example, if you see a suspicious looking person or someone who makes you feel uncomfortable in a parking structure or lot, leave the area. Report your suspicions to the authorities.

IN RESIDENCE HALLS

1. Lock your door at all times, even if you run down the hall for just a few minutes to visit a friend.

2. Do not prop security doors open.

3. In residence halls accessed only by a special key or card, do not let anyone without such a key enter, no matter how presentable their appearance or how plausible their request seems. Simply tell them, “I would like to help you out, but we are very concerned about security in this residence,” and direct them to campus security for assistance.

4. Be especially aware of security during vacation periods, when there are fewer people on campus.

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