



**California  
State  
University,  
Northridge**

***University Police Department  
Rape Advocacy Support***

*...Continued from Why do I need a SART medical exam?*

In the event you decide to go forward with prosecution, even if it may be several years later, forensic evidence will be available. Not all injuries are visible, so an exam will allow for not only “trace” evidence to be collected, but to photograph injuries only visible with a high-magnification camera.

*What will happen at the medical facility?*

First, a sexual assault nurse examiner will interview you to get an account of what happened before, during and after the assault. Next, the nurse will perform a forensic examination to evaluate injuries and collect physical evidence. The exam is similar to a gynecological examination. Once the exam is finished, the evidence will be packaged up by the nurse and turned over to the police department for processing. In the event your clothes are kept as evidence, the nurse will provide you with a fresh change of clothes to wear home. The nurse may also provide you with preventative medication for pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Your advocate will offer you literature about where you can seek long term assistance in which you can read later, and also important numbers you may need in the future.

*What you might experience following a sexual assault:*

- Feelings of fear, anger, guilt, embarrassment, and self-blame that follow sexual assault are normal.
- Long-term affects may include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which include flashbacks, recurrent and intrusive memories, psychological and physiological distress, a heightened state of anxiety, phobias, nightmares and depression .

*Where can I go for additional help?*

**University Police Department**

(818) 677-7922—Crime Prevention Unit

The rape crisis advocate can provide referrals for seeking additional assistance with counseling and other support services. The police department offers an empowering women’s self-defense class.

**The Valley Trauma Center**



24-hr. Sexual Assault Hotline - (818) 886-0453 or (661) 253-0258. The Valley Trauma Center serves the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys. They offer free and low-cost services such as individual / family / group counseling.

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*What You Need to Know if You are Raped...  
And How a Rape Crisis Advocate Can Help You*

Sexual assault is a traumatic experience. It is normal to experience a multitude of emotions such as fear, anger, guilt, embarrassment and self-blame. This pamphlet will explain your rights as a victim, the phases of the investigative process, the role of a rape crisis advocate, who is on staff with the University Police Department, what you might experience following a sexual assault and where to go for immediate and long-term care. The University Police Department takes very seriously reports of sexual assault and we care about your safety.

*Now that I’m at the police department, what will happen to me?*

All university police officers are trained as sexual assault first responders and some are trained sexual assault investigators. The investigative process begins with the officer gathering statements and conducting an initial interview. The officer will also interview any witnesses or suspects. During the interview, the investigator will ask you to give a detailed account of what happened. The investigator will also advise you of your right to confidentiality and offer the services of a trained rape crisis advocate. In order to collect forensic evidence, the investigator will transport you to a specially-equipped medical facility.

*What does a rape crisis advocate do and why should I have one?*

In accordance with section 264.2 of the California Penal Code, the services of a rape crisis advocate must be offered to all sexual assault victims. The CSUN Police Department has a rape crisis advocate on staff that is available when requested. The primary responsibility of a Rape Crisis Advocate is to provide emotional support during the law enforcement investigation and to facilitate communication between the law enforcement officers, medical personnel, and you as the victim. The advocate will accompany you to the medical facility and be available when you meet with the nurse and during the SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) forensic medical exam, if you wish.

*Why do I need a SART medical exam?*

The purpose of a medical exam is to collect forensic evidence. Whether or not you decide to go forward with prosecution of the assailant, it’s critical to collect forensic evidence within 72 hours of the assault. ►