

Can men be sexually assaulted?

Yes. Rape and sexual assault can happen to anyone, including men. Thousands of men are sexually assaulted and raped every year, and it has nothing to do with their race, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, size, appearance or strength. A man can be sexually assaulted by a stranger, a family member, or someone he knows and trusts. Experts estimate that 1 in 6 men are sexually assaulted during their lifetime. Even though male sexual assault remains vastly underreported, the United States Department of Justice documents more than 13,000 cases of male rape every year.



What should I do if I am raped or sexually assaulted?

- Seek medical treatment. **DO NOT** bathe, shower, eat or drink anything, or change clothes before you go.
- Go to a friend's house or somewhere you can get emotional support.
- Strongly consider reporting the rape to authorities (this does not mean that you have to agree to press charges).
- Seek counseling. Even if you don't report the rape or press charges, you should contact your nearest rape crisis center for information about counseling. Their services are free and confidential.

What are typical reactions during or after a rape or sexual assault?

Sexual assault and rape are always traumatic experiences. Sometimes a man who is sexually assaulted or raped has an involuntary or forced erection or ejaculation. Also, muscles in the anus often relax when a man is raped. This does not mean that the survivor wanted to be raped or sexually assaulted. Involuntary erections and ejaculations are normal reactions to trauma.

Most of us grow up thinking that rape happens only to women. If male rape survivors think so too, they may feel isolated and alone. If people in our community believe that, they may further this sense of isolation on the part of male rape survivors.

Men usually share many of the same feelings of female sexual assault survivors. They may have feelings of:

- guilt
- powerlessness
- shock
- anger
- fear
- disappointment

There may also be denial and/or concern regarding their safety.

There are, however, special issues that may be different for men:

- concerns about sexuality and/or masculinity
- medical procedures
- reporting to law enforcement
- telling others
- finding resources and support

Strong or weak, outgoing or withdrawn, homosexual or heterosexual, old or young, male or female; no one does anything that justifies sexual assault.

Sexual Assault and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Sometimes a survivor can contract a sexually transmitted disease during the assault, but not have symptoms until months later.

Many people are concerned about HIV infection after surviving a sexual assault, and it is important to know the facts. Any contact between your bodily fluids (including blood and semen) and the bodily fluids of an HIV-positive person puts you at risk of contracting HIV. Although repeated contact with HIV is usually necessary for infection, always consult a physician if you think you may have been exposed to any sexually transmitted disease.

Facts About Men and Rape

- ◆ Men are usually raped by other men, although females can be perpetrators as well.
- ◆ Rapists who rape men are heterosexual in the vast majority of cases.
- ◆ Both homosexual and heterosexual men from all parts of society can be raped (not just in prisons).
- ◆ Men are less likely to report rape.

What Can We Do?

- ◆ Recognize that men and boys are sexually assaulted.
- ◆ Be aware of the biases and myths concerning sexual assault.
- ◆ Recognize that harmful sex-role stereotypes which create narrow definitions of masculinity, as well as misconceptions about homosexuality, make it difficult for male survivors to disclose when they are raped.
- ◆ As individuals and as a community we must work to combat and challenge these attitudes.
- ◆ It is important that male rape survivors have support around them and that they be able to make their own decisions about what action to take.



Resources

Rape Abuse and Incest National Network
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
www.rainn.org

Texas Crime Victims Compensation Fund
1-800-983-9933

Sexual Assault Legal Line
1-888-296-SAFE (7273)

Male Survivors of Sexual Assault



 *The voice of sexual violence survivors in Texas.*



6200 La Calma
Suite 110
Austin, Texas 78752
www.taasa.org

National Sexual Assault Hotline
Free. Confidential. 24/7.

1-800-656-HOPE